



Dr. T. C. Khandwala

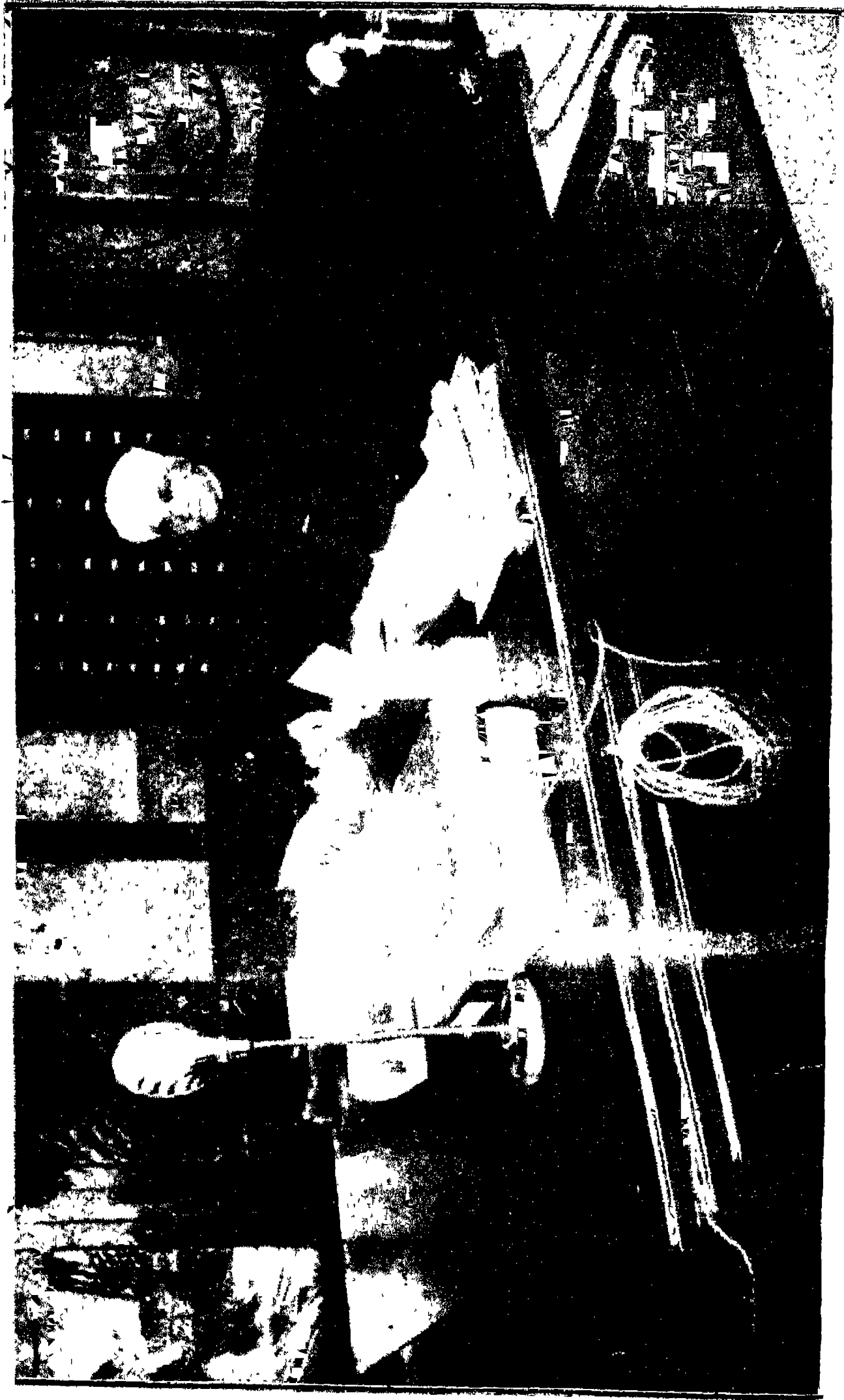
SPIRITUAL POWERHOUSE

EDITED BY
V. S. SOHONI
AND
B. B. KESKAR

1940

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K. Nat jan

FOREWORD

I have been asked to write a Foreword for this book. It is named "Spiritual Powerhouse". The name and plan of the book had been settled before I was asked to write a Foreword. I say "Plan" because, although this collection of extracts from writings and sermons does not follow any apparent plan, there is a single common thread running through them all. I recently came across the following passage in Admiral R. E. Byrd's fascinating book "Alone" in which he narrates his experiences at "Advance Base" nearest point till then reached to the South Pole, in which he spent some sixty or seventy days without any companion, taking observations for the location of the South Pole. Here in this terribly cold region—the thermometer was often 60 or 70 degrees below zero—Byrd passed through severe hardships nerved by the single aim of reaching the South Pole. At one time he thought he was dying. And then he put down on paper his faith as follows :—

The universe is not dead. Therefore, there is an Intelligence there and it is all-pervading. At least the purpose, possibly the major purpose, of that Intelligence is the achievement of universal harmony.

Striving in the right direction for Peace (Harmony) therefore, as well as the achievement of it, is the result of accord with that Intelligence.

It is desirable to effect that accord.

The human race, then, is not alone in the universe. Though I am cut off from human beings I am not alone. For untold ages man has felt an awareness of that Intelligence. Belief in it is the one point where all religions agree. It has been called by many names. Many call it God.

This was the gist of the philosophy which had come to me out of April's hush.

In passing, I may say that it is only persons who pursue some high endeavour which taxes their strength to the straining point, who feel the need and realise the truth of the existence of a Power permeating and controlling the Universe. The function of religion is to help us to effect "accord" with this Intelligence, God. Two verses in Katha Upanishad convey the identical message. Byrd was an American Naval officer and it is highly improbable that he came across the verses. But for this, one might conclude that he derived his faith from the Upanishad. Here is a translation of the verses :—

Sole, controller, the internal *Atman* of all living things, who makes His own form diverse ; to the intelligent who realise him as seated in the self, eternal bliss is theirs, not others'.

Eternal among the ephemeral, conscious among the unconscious, who, being one, dispenses desired objects to many, the intelligent who see Him seated in their selves, to them, eternal peace, not to others.

The Rishi who proclaimed this great truth in majestic words was not exploring the polar region. But certainly he must have been engaged in a spiritual adventure not less taxing, because, as I said, it is only the man who lives at the top of his energy in the pursuit of some high aim, who realises Truth.

All religions show the way to bring about "accord" with the Infinite Intelligence. They consist of prayers, meditation, spoken and written words. In this volume are included passages from the utterances and writings of men of all religions. The seeker after Truth on opening its pages is sure to come upon some hint or suggestion answering to his particular need. Spiritual Power comes only from spiritual experience. Several of those whose words are to be found in this book had such experience and, therefore, the book is rightly named "Spiritual Powerhouse."

Bandra,

K. NATARAJAN.

13th July, 1940.

INTRODUCTION

How to enforce religious and moral truths on the mind of the ordinary man and woman is a great problem. But one of the best methods, it will be admitted, to do this, is to bring within easy reach of persons, the thoughts and sayings of those who have themselves lived these truths: To many, the subject of religion is a dry one, but their interest, even in this apparently dry subject, may be roused, if an attempt is made to bring home to them, the truth of the subject with the help of short, pithy and telling utterances of those to whom religion was a pleasure, a duty and a blessing. In the pages which follow, it will be found that an earnest attempt has been made to select and offer that which not only should be pleasant but inspiring and elevating.

It is thought by many, especially in our country, that Theism is a negative creed and that the Theistic Church of India has nothing to offer to its adherents which would enable them to regulate their life and conduct. Theism, they think, is dry and incapable of appealing to the heart and imagination of its followers. Its mission, they assert, is destruction and not construction; and a faith which is incapable of the latter, cannot, in the very nature of it, last long. They go even so far as to attribute the very slow growth of the Theistic Church of India to this inherent weakness. The idea that Theism is a negative faith is entirely untrue. That it has the power of moulding the heart and regulating the life and conduct of those who accept it, that it has been a mighty force in the promotion of *Bhakti* 'devotion' and sublime love to God must be

evident to all who have watched the lives and work of those who were privileged to lead the movement and from whose writings and utterances, we present these selections.

The religious sermons published in this volume are of men who were themselves full of the true spirit of religion and charity; and as such a perusal of them should assist to inspire the reader with a spirit of love and joy. That life is not *Maya* 'illusion' but a reality to be lived according to the dictates of conscience, that in a true religion, dogmas have no place, that God is love and joy, that He is peace and purity are some of the many truths, these selections should help to inculcate.

It was originally the intention of the compilers to divide the volume into specific chapters and classify and publish the matter coming under them, together. But that idea was given up as it was thought that it would promote monotony and fail to sustain the interest of the reader. Some of the selections in this volume deal with religion and prayer; others are only thoughts for meditation; still others merely gems of thought; a few lives which should at once serve as inspiration and guidance are included and together form the Heading 'Seekers after God.' 'Miscellaneous' contains articles which do not bear directly on religion, but deal with reform of different kinds in its relation to religion. The chapter 'Prayers' should serve to inspire, to create faith, confidence and joy. It should also bring out clearly the Eastern idea of God, who is not only our protecting Father, but our loving Mother. The prayers which are mostly of the greatest Saint of Maharashtra—Tukaram, bring out the mother's qualities of love and

tenderness, mercy and unceasing care, as no other prayers do. In later times, Keshub Chandra Sen, more than any other devotee of God, addressed Him as Mother. God is our Father who with His strong arm protects us and keeps us from harm, but He is more than that. He is indeed our Mother who out of sheer love for us—Her children would continue to hope and strive for our reclamation, even though we were damned in body and soul, just as our earthly mother would.

For the selections published in these pages, our thanks are due to the late Mr. D. G. Vaidya, for forty years Editor and Publisher of the *Subodh Patrika*, the weekly organ of the Prarthana Samaj of Bombay. Mr. Vaidya not only permitted us to use the files of the Patrika for the selections, but had agreed to collaborate with us in the work of compilation. But when the work was actually taken in hand, he fell ill and his long illness and subsequent death deprived us of his co-operation. Our thanks are also due to other friends for some of the sketches of the lives of "Seekers after God." In this connection, mournful mention has to be made of Dr. V. Ramkrishna Rao of Cocanada, who is no more. At our request, Dr. Rao wrote a sketch of the life of Dr. Sir Venkat Ratnam Naidu, Dr. Rao's *Guru* and predecessor in the post of the Principal of the Maharaja of Pittapuram College, Cocanada. The packet containing the sketch addressed and stamped, with a covering letter, dated the 11th November 1939 lay on the table of Dr. Ramkrishna Rao who died suddenly of heart-failure, the same day. This was apparently his last writing. The packet was posted to us by his people, some time after the news of his death appeared

in the press. We are indebted to the "Brahma Dharma" of Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, translated into English by Dr. Hema Chandra Sarkar M. A., for some excerpts quoted in this volume. We have taken some extracts from the writings of Prof. V. N. Naik M. A., for which we are thankful to him.

The circumstances leading to the publication of the "SPIRITUAL POWERHOUSE" are in themselves interesting. In 1935 Dr. Khandwala was seriously ill and his life was despaired of. During his illness, he expressed a desire that a book in English which could impart strength to the struggling soul of man might be published. A generous friend of the venerable doctor at once offered to bear the cost of the publication. Later on the compilers were sent for and were asked to bring out the volume. Fortunately, Dr. Khandwala recovered and expressed his desire to have the book published, while he lived.

At the request of the compilers, Dr. Khandwala agreed to write his Auto-Biography which is now published as a companion to this volume. The entire cost of both the books is borne by a friend of Dr. Khandwala who wishes to be anonymous. We have no doubt, that Dr. Khandwala's Auto-Biography, like the "SPIRITUAL POWERHOUSE", will be found interesting and instructive by the reader. It depicts the struggle of a conscientious seeker after God. A short sketch of the life of this silent, all-round reformer appears in this volume, also.

The "SPIRITUAL POWERHOUSE" is intended to give its readers in an attractive form, food and

refreshment for the mind and the heart and the much needed strength to the soul. We have not the slightest doubt that the reading matter included in this volume which contains the invaluable experiences of many a devout soul is capable of fulfilling that purpose. With this conviction, we have now great pleasure and satisfaction in sending the "SPIRITUAL POWERHOUSE" on its mission of spreading joy and sun-shine where they are most needed.

The full names of writers whose initials appear under certain selections are given elsewhere.

In conclusion, we offer our heart-felt thanks to the Loving Mother for enabling us to complete this, our labour of love.

Prabha Kuti, }
 Vile Parle, }
 10th August 1940. }

V. S. SOHONI
B. B. KESKAR

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ABBREVIATIONS

A. B. P.	Amrit Bazar Patrika
A. K. M.	A. K. Mudliar
B. S. T.	B. S. Turkhad
D. N. C.	Prof. Dharendra Nath Chowdhary
D. V. S.	D. V. Shrikhande
G. B. T.	G. B. Trivedi
G. L. C.	G. L. Chandavarkar
H. C. M.	Dr. Herambachandra Maitra
H. C. S.	Dr. Hemchandra Sarkar
H. N. R.	H. Narayan Rao
H. V.	Harchandrai Vishindas
I. M.	Indian Messenger
J. C. B.	Sir J. C. Bose
J. T. S.	Dr. J. T. Sunderland
K. C. S.	Keshub Chunder Sen
K. N.	K. Natarajan
M. C. P.	M. C. Parekh
M. G. R.	Justice M. G. Ranade
N. G. C.	Sir N. G. Chandavarkar
N. G. W.	Prof. N. G. Welinkar
P. A. W.	Prof. P. A. Wadia
P. C. M.	Pratapchandra Muzumdar
R. G. B.	Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar
R. N. C.	Ramanand Chatterji
R. N. T.	Ravindra Nath Tagore
S. C. C.	Satischandra Chakravarti
S. N. S.	Pandit Shivnath Shastri
T. C. K.	Dr. T. C. Khandwala
T. L. V.	Prof. T. L. Vaswani
V. G. B.	V. G. Bhandarkar
V. N. N.	Prof. V. N. Naik
V. R. J.	V. R. Joshi
V. R. R.	Dr. V. Rama Krishna Rao
V. R. S.	V. R. Shinde
V. S. S.	V. S. Sohoni
V. Y. K.	V. Y. Kashalkar
Y. N. T.	Y. N. Tipnis
Y. V. B.	Y. V. Bhandarkar



SPIRITUAL POWERHOUSE

Practical Religion

One of the most important questions of the day that engage public attention is religion. But we have confounded theology with religion. A clear and tangible line must be drawn between the two. Theology is science, religion is life. It is quite possible for one to be the greatest theologian without the least inclination to be religious, Practical in every other department of life, we rest contented with dry abstractions, dissenting dogmas, and sly subtleties on a subject of such vital significance.

Theology and religion, though distinct, can be seen harmonized in a person who searches after the Infinite good, and illustrates all his knowledge in his actions. With an inverted eye, he sees clearly that every single element of his nature is adapted to goodness and virtue; that nothing can be more manly than to have a humble pious soul. His thought, word and action are dictates of truth. Truth is all in all to him. He submits to truth not in the hope of any earthly interest, but simply because, it is the law of his nature. To him such submission, therefore, is voluntary and not compulsory. To him truth is as palpable as anything can be. He has not to wait, as some say, till death for reward or salvation. His salvation begins here, and grows with his growing hope. He cannot swerve an iota from morality, piety and virtue without self-condemnation. He

therefore prefers a trying religious life to the craft and cunning of the world, and possesses a calm, humble soul, which is all the wealth he pants after, and above all pours out his heart, in sincere prayer to Him "from Whom and through Whom and for Whom are all things." This is practical religion.

Bearing Witness to Religion

A religion in order that its ideal may stand unimpaired through the centuries, should be constantly producing men who are inspired by love and enthusiasm for it, who think it their highest mission on earth to live for it and their greatest glory, if necessary, to die for it. The blood of the martyrs, it has been well said, is the seed of the church, and though fortunately or unfortunately, we are no longer called upon to shed our blood, in proof of our faith, we are always called upon to do what is much more difficult, to bear constant witness in our character and conduct to the validity and beneficence of its influence over us. Every religion in its infancy has remained pure and simple; in its earliest period, every religion is a religion of conduct. It is only later on when a priesthood arises to make a trade of religion that corruptions creep in and the original purity is lost in the reign of ritual.

As We Pray

Prayer acknowledges the power of God, and expresses the will to co-operate. Do we pray? Doubtless we do at times, when we must choose between two opinions, when we are distressed, when some amazing joy has come into our lives. We pray then, to make sure that what is best and truest in us and beyond, may combine to help us play our part with truth and power. Tears of joy and tears of sadness water the seeds of love and hope. It only depends whether we are the good ground that shall bring forth of itself richly. Prayer would bring the power of God into our lives. But it is already here! Prayer would have humanity transfigured in divinity. Do we regularly desire full consciousness of the real presence of God? When we long for any thing at all, is it in order that some passion may be gratified, some ambition fulfilled, some



Saint Tukaram

selfish purpose achieved? We have had our longings, but were they prayers? They have often been gratified; *we* have seen to that, and we have reaped sorrow and trouble and woe. We have, perhaps, brought shame and confusion upon others; possibly we have driven from us friends and dear ones by accomplishing our will, by getting our way. And to look back upon any such incidents in our lives is to have the assurance borne in upon us that however it may be with us *now*, we were not conscious of God within us and around us *then*. Men often deny that "the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children," that "the wages of sin is death," that "selfishness leads us away from God;" but can they maintain that denial when they cease to live alone?

Law of the Spiritual Universe

"The life of God is illimitable Love, and the life of man is only found in union with God, in union with self-forgetful Love. Whatever is not of Love is against God and against man, and is a part of death." That is the Master Truth and Law of the spiritual universe.

Saint Tukaram

The essential feature of this prophet of the people is his extreme simplicity, his unapproachable candour, his unexampled humility. Like a great mountain, whose peaks are lost in the clouds, but whose base mingles in the common plain, so that, the very worms can creep on it. Tukaram, although the close of his life in this world is enveloped in a hopeless mystery, holds himself before our gaze his origin and earlier life with an utterly merciless frankness. He says in one of his hymns:—

"By birth a Shudra, and Vaishya by trade, I worshipped my family God. After the demise of my parents, I was distressed in life, I was robbed by a famine of my estate and credit, and a wife died of starvation! I first began to perform *kirtan* and observe fast; but my mind lacked in application. I respectfully made by heart some sayings of the good. I did not allow myself to be ashamed of serving the saintly. I

made my own mind a witness to truth and falsehood and did not heed the opinion of the many...I felt the poetic inspiration...I realized the divine mercy."

In another, he is still harder on himself:—

"Hark, Oh saints ! I am a peculiar wretch. Why are ye kind to me. I only know my mind. I am not saved indeed. They honour me only by imitating one another !"

Failing in the life of the world he succeeded to the higher life and therefore he confesses :—

"Thank God, I became bankrupt and distressed in a famine. Thank God, my (second) wife turned out a termagant, and thus scandalized in the world. Thank God, I did not feel shame of Society but found refuge in Thee !"

If the earlier life was so unenviably and pathetically human, the higher one that succeeded was marred by no unearthly pretensions. He was always a self-searching and self-humiliating man, more ready to teach himself than the world. Tukaram had a most genuine hatred for either marvel and mystery and for personal fame. The crowning feature of his life was not a poetic inspiration, but a prophetic inspiration, although even this latter fact he only scarcely accentuates in his hymns, while in the bearing of his life, he never professed to be a teacher or founder of a new religion or sect. The mission of his life was to facilitate the cause of religion and to minister to the masses by proclaiming effectively that God is accessible to the commonest soul, through *Bhakti* or devotion and by leaving behind him a simple mode of divine service which has become now the most popular among all classes.

He proclaims:—

Having girt up my loins, I face *Kali* and *Kal* (the tempting evil and the destroying time). I have made a footpath on the sea of life.

Come ye ! small and great, of castes indifferent and sexes stern or soft. None need be anxious.

Those that are engaged in vain work, that are weary of contemplation and penance, that are saved or would be saved.

I hold the seal, am sent to this world and have the banner of the name of God.

Faith in God

Most men, believe in the existence of God. There are few, very few persons who will suffer themselves to be called atheists. Yet the majority of those who profess their faith in God, are not true believers. We believe that, an Overruling Providence controls the destiny of the universe. But this belief is mostly due to our reasoning processes and tradition. But such a knowledge of God is not based on strong foundation and cannot help us in time of need. We know knowledge is of two kinds, direct and indirect. We admit the existence of many things by reasoning and hearsay. We trust on what others say; this is indirect knowledge. But when we ourselves see a thing the knowledge we get is direct and immediate. Faith is also of two kinds. There is a kind of faith which proceeds from ignorance and sentimentalism of man. There are occasions when men in their ecstasy of joy or exuberance of feelings are led to think that they have attained faith in God. Men who are deeply sentimental by nature often mis-read their own feelings and misinterpret their own thoughts at the time of prayer and hymns. They are often led to think, owing to the exuberance of emotion, that they have attained spiritual life and it is easy for them to control their passions, to devote their whole life and energy to the service of God. But when trials come, they fail and fail most miserably. When they have to fight actual battles in the practical field of life, when they have to perform stern duties of life, their courage fails, they find their own mistakes and often fall easy victims to the temptations of life. This kind of faith cannot give strength to the struggling souls, cannot hold a ray of hope to those who have sunk down in despair: it cannot give firmness to the weak in discharging their duties, and patient forbearance to those who are tossed on the waves of joy and grief. What seemed possible at the time of prayer, is found impossible in the actual field of life. This is no faith at all. Its basis is weak and cannot help man at the time of need. True faith is of a quite different nature. It beautifies man's life and gives him power to resist evil and to do acts of virtue. This true faith brings about revolution in man's individual life and in the life of society. It helps man to see God in his own heart, to have direct knowledge of Him. It is not the knowledge of God through tradition or philosophy. It is true

knowledge direct and positive in the heart of man himself. This knowledge of God is attained through fervent worship, single minded devotion and sincere prayers.

Through true worship divine presence is felt within man's own soul. He has no longer to rest satisfied with the traditional saying but the experiences of God in his own soul. This faith gives strength to the weak, hope to the hopeless, joy and peace to those who are heavy laden. It helps man to conquer his passions, and attain spiritual life.

—S. N. S.

The Basis of True Religion

There is a religion prior to, and simpler than all the dogmatic systems of faith now in existence. This religion is called Theism, or Brahmoism or the religion of the Brahma Samaj. Those, who urge the necessity of accepting a book as revelation, do so on the ground that this book contains the true word of God. Before accepting then this book as the word of God, it is implied that we must have a prior belief in that God, whose word it is said to be. Belief in God therefore, is simple, natural, instinctive, and independent of all books. And if true belief in God constitutes the soul of all religion, religion is founded upon something that is different from, prior to, and deeper than all books and systems; or in other words, religion is founded upon instincts, the intuitions and the natural perceptions of man's heart. The Brahma Samaj, therefore, takes the instincts of man as the basis of its religion.

Theism

Theism is wider than the Brahma Samaj, wider than the New Dispensation in which I believe, wider and deeper than any sectarian or any denominational faith. Theism perhaps will never be formulated as a denominational system, but will ever be the bedrock on which all systems and all religious philosophies are founded. It will be the back-bone around which the nerves and tissues and muscles of different religions shall be arranged. When I speak of the swelling devotion of Theism, I mean all the prayer and adoration and the unspoken meditation. In our society we often notice with wondering hearts a grand revelation of the Spirit of God, and

if we do not notice it, it is only because our souls are inert and our hearts are benumbed; but we do at times see, how the *descent* of God has meant the *ascent* of the soul, when touched by the great Eternal Spirit all that is deep within man has unfolded, and all that is tender in him has blossomed into the beauty of heavenly life.

Prayer

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire
Uttered or unexpressed
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast."

Thus every true prayer must proceed from a heart full of emotion. Just as there can be no fire until a heated body attains a certain temperature, even so, there can be no true prayer when the heart is cold, and only the intellect actuates the tongue to repeat a few more or less beautiful and cunning formulas. On the altar of the heart there must be a perpetual fire burning. When we are engaged in our worldly pursuits, that fire may be covered with ashes; it may burn low and we may not be conscious of it. When we approach God in prayer, we throw the windows of the heart open, the gentle breezes blow upon the ash-covered coals and once more the sacred fire leaps into flame. Our best thoughts are thrown into the burning element, the whole frame is a glow, and the incense diffuses its fragrance all around and the scented smoke rises heavenwards. "Prayer," says the poet, "may be either uttered or unexpressed." It is the emanation from the heart and not the vibration of the tongue that constitutes prayer. To borrow a phrase which has recently become classical, in public prayers that which proceeds from the heart may have "to go round by the head." Suitable and adequate expression must be given to our sentiments when we ask others to join in them. Here the head has to co-operate with the heart. But this is in united, and not in individual prayer.

The next stanza in this little poem develops the leading idea:—

"Prayer is the burthen of a sigh,
The falling of a tear
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near."

The Power of Religion

The power of religion is not to be solely or mainly judged by its corporate action ; by the institutions it creates ; by the part which it plays in the government of the world. It is to be found much more in its action on the individual soul, and especially in those times and circumstances when man is most isolated from society. It is in furnishing the ideals and motives of individual life, in guiding and purifying the emotions, in promoting habits of thought and feeling that rise above the things of earth ; in the comfort it can give in age, sorrow, disappointment and bereavement ; in the seasons of sickness, weakness, declining faculties, and approaching death that its power is most felt.

—*W. H. E. Lecky.*

Religious Instincts

Religion means belief in certain unseen things. Every human being and every community of men could be proved to believe in some of these things. The faculty of belief, therefore, is an instinct of the human mind. Circumstances awaken this instinct into strong exercise and it is the office of religion to bring these circumstances into existence. Hence religion is often full of difficulties which mature faith and make the instinct of belief very active. Belief in unseen things ends at last in making those things seen. The great foundation, therefore, of religion is belief.

Every human being and every community could be proved to cherish a feeling of reverence for certain objects. From this feeling of reverence proceed worship, prayer, ceremony, symbol, and everything else that appeals to the imagination of the religious mind.

The next is the Instinct of obedience to laws and commands. Religion means the positive performance of our duties and the renunciation of all that is wrong and immoral, because duty means the law and commandment of God, and sin means the disobedience to Him.

Religion, therefore, means perfect morality, and none but the pure in heart can behold God. When strong and clear belief is joined to deep and tender reverence, and when a pure and spotless moral life bears testimony to the two, then is a man truly called a religious man.



Guru Nanak

Learn of Whomsoever You Can

Now his would be the loss who would throw away a cocoanut because it has a hard shell. No sane man would do it. Nor would any man refuse to receive jewels, because they are offered to him wrapped in rags. It would be the height of folly for him to do so. And yet in the case of moral advice and religious and spiritual instruction we look into the qualifications of the person who offers it before making up our minds for its acceptance. With such keen eyes do we look into them that it would be strange if we did not discover any disqualifications which in our eyes would rid us of the duty of lending a willing ear. But the defects in the title-deed of the preacher is a matter that concerns him alone. It is not a matter that concerns us. We have simply to judge of the worth of what he offers us and go by that alone, as in the case of the kernel of the cocoanut, or pearls or other jewels tied up in rags. We shall not allow ourselves to fall into a pit in our way, because it is a child that draws our attention to it. If the words of wisdom falling from the lips of a man, young in years, seem hollow to you because they cannot, in your opinion, proceed from his own personal experience, it may be that they embody the personal experience of some one else of whom he has had them. Or should the man who preaches be a man in rags, too far below you in worldly position to deserve your notice, turn not away from him. There may be avenues shaded from the eyes of the others through which he has wandered to eternal truth. Have we not as an actual fact seen the world moved to its foundations by such men too often to excuse our forgetfulness of the fact?

— V. S. S.

Guru Nanak—the Founder of Sikhism.

The life and teachings of Guru Nanak the founder of the Sikh religion have a peculiar charm about them which no distance of time or space can take away. He was born at a time, when the whole continent of India was convulsed with internecine wars and social and religious tyranny of the worst kind, when both the rulers and the ruled had become thoroughly demoralised and when justice, love, fellow-feeling and all that characterises civilized and progressive

societies had left the land. It was the time when empty discussions as to the superiority of one religion over another were carried on most vehemently, by men whose only ideal of life was to earn reputation as successful debators and metaphysicians, but whose religion had hardly affected the very fringe of their every day life. Guru Nanak came into this world at such a time to preach to men the true way of worshipping God and to bring to their notice, what they had altogether forgotten that the unfailing way of obtaining bliss, was not to waste time and energy in useless and unending wranglings, but to spend them in the service of man. He did not claim to be a saviour or a prophet. He preached boldly and in the most unequivocal manner against formalisms and meaningless ceremonies, occupying the high place of religion. Nor did he shrink from telling men, what must have appeared to them to have been nothing short of blasphemy, that God did not dwell in temples, made by the hand of man, however holy they may be supposed to be, nor was He found to be in a particular place only, but that He was everywhere, even in the innermost recesses of their hearts. His whole life showed that his sympathies were not narrow, but he was really actuated by an all-embracing love for humanity, for whose welfare, he worked and prayed not in vain. The work which the Theistic Church of our country has been doing was also the life-work of Guru Nanak, who was never tired of impressing upon the people of his time, the necessity of cultivating the virtue of accepting truth, from whatever quarters, it came. The fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man were his watch-words and he mercilessly, yet, respectfully condemned all that went to upset these two grand principles of every religion that deserved the name. He looked upon and treated all scriptures, howsoever full of ethical teachings they may have been, as fallible and raised his uncompromising voice against conventional forms of the worship of God. His voice is still to be heard, asking not only the Sikhs, but all to forget their petty differences, to give up their false ways of God's worship, to give up all distinctions of castes, to love man, because he is man, to devote ourselves to the service of our brethren and to cultivate that kind of active *Bhakti*, which has for its end, the bettering of the world. It still proclaims to the world that God is one, that humility of spirit



is the means of seeing Him and that He requires from us nothing but good and unselfish deeds—deeds that are prompted by love for Him and for His children. — V. S. S.

Revelation.

The great subject with which all religions are concerned is Revelation. Those books which are considered as revelation are said to contain all the purposes of God with regard to man, revealed by Himself to the heart of man, and it is maintained that beyond these books the mind of God cannot be known. God is eternal and unlimited, and his purposes and dispensations therefore are equally without limit. A book that is called revelation may contain the purposes of God, but there are certainly other purposes of his, quite beyond what the book teaches. As mankind progresses and the world gradually becomes better, our duties and relations to God and man become higher and more complicate, and our Maker demands from us what our changed position may be rightly expected to yield. God's purposes grow upon us as we grow within ourselves. Now, where and how can these purposes be found? They are found by the spiritual man within his own spirit. When God unveils Himself and opens His secrets in the heart of His devotee, that is revelation. Revelation may be of two kinds, direct and indirect. Direct revelation comes from the spirit of God, independent of external means, and presents itself before the perceptions of our soul. There is secret communication between God and man. Man beholds God, man hears God, man touches God, not in matter but in spirit. The secret purposes of the omniscient are known, the Unknown and Unknowable becomes known, and He stands with his face uncovered before the eye of faith. That is direct revelation.

Indirect revelation comes to us through a man, a book a mountain, or through any other object of nature. It reflects and represents the purposes of God, His beauties, or His truths, and makes an appeal to our heart and understanding. We gather them outside and treasure them up for our benefit.

Rich and Poor

Religion is not a loaf to be eaten by the rich, the crumbs of which only are to be allowed to the poor. Class distinctions are as destructive of real religion as caste distinctions. On the contrary, religion is more the concern of the poor than of the rich. The seed of religion can develop into a stately tree, only on the soil of poverty and wordly adversity. The rich are from the circumstances of their life, more in love with the world, more liable to its temptations, more open to its influences. They are more mindful of the present than of that which is not conditioned by time, more devoted to the contingent than to the universal, care more for what is expedient than for what is true. The religious instinct like a seed planted in an inhospitable soil dies away, for want of nourishment. Christ was a poor man and his audience was composed of poor and despised men. Prince Siddhartha had to cast off the robes of sovereignty and wear the brown weeds of a Bhikshu or beggar before he could become Buddha or the enlightened religious teacher. Kabir was a poor man; Nanak was a poor man; Tukaram was a poor man. If a religious movement is not a sham movement, not a mockery, and contains a germ of everlasting religious truth that stirs up the souls of men and before the dazzling light of which, the world with all its riches and honours is actually felt and overspreads the world, then rich men bow their heads to poor men, and mighty potentates fall at their feet. Such is the power of truth. It is by its means that the poor, the humble, and the despised become the teachers and command the devotion of the rich, the haughty and the honoured.

Good use of life

The youth whose life is humblest in condition can still make that life beautiful if he will seek the things that are more excellent. He may live among the wisest of his race by means of books, and may mould his nature to the noblest heroism by those spiritual comradeships that come to him through culture. I have again and again urged the duty of culture on my readers, because I know that for the youth doomed to too hard or menial drudgery, with no wide prospects, and with little chance of rising in the social scale, there is no consolation like the consolation of culture. The

harder and the meaner the outward life is, the more do we need some inward world to which we may retire. If we do rise in life, culture will give us a fitness for the purer pleasures of life; and if we never rise, culture will still furnish us with pleasures which are independent of circumstances. We make our own world whatever may be our social environment, and it will be our own fault if we do not make a pure and good world. —*W. J. Douson in the Young Man.*

The Religion of the Ancient Rishi

The appearances in external Nature had a principal share in the formation of the religious belief of the Ancient Indian Rishis (sages). In the resplendent fire on his hearth, fire that existed concealed in everything and that could be made manifest by simple friction, that cooked his food and burnt houses and forests to ashes with an irresistible power, he saw the god Agni; in the dark rainy clouds that after the flashes of lightning and the roar of thunder, poured down bountiful showers of water upon the parched earth that cooled the air, fertilised the earth and gratified his soul, he beheld the Beneficent and Mighty Indra; in the soft light of the dawn, he observed the lovely Usha; in the sun whose warmth gave life to everything, and whose rays brightened all they touched, and who every day ascended and descended the sky, he found Savita, Surya and Vishnu; and in the all pervading and tranquil vault of the sky, he discovered Varuna. Innumerable and various were the phenomena the power and beneficence displayed and which were thus adored and worshipped with appropriate names. But still the idea of a supreme power fashioning and controlling the Universe was never absent, even in the midst of this multiplicity of gods, and gradually it developed and became more and more distinct, until in the later Vedic period, all the individual gods were absorbed in the "One God, the Creator of the Heavens and the earth, whose eye is everywhere, whose face is everywhere, whose arm is everywhere, whose foot is everywhere, and who, by his arms and feet moves everything; who gives life and strength, whose command is adored by all beings, and by gods, who by his greatness is the sovereign of the living and moving Universe, and controls man and beast and whose might, these snowy mountains, the rolling ocean and the earth proclaim." The vastness

and immensity of the Universe and the infinite power displayed in it, raised the wonder and evoked the deepest adoration of the gifted Rishi; its grandeur, beauty and tranquility filled his soul with feelings of inexpressible gladness and joy, and elevated him above the sorrows, troubles and the littleness of this life into a region of happiness, peace and greatness and he lost himself in the contemplation of that great being who fills all space and who is the source of Life.

—*Light and Joy.*

Ideals

It is a truth and not an idle phrase, that man does not live by bread alone; that it is his privilege to live by aspiration, hope, and love, to be moved by ideal impulses which cause him to check the impulses of power and self, to forego the transient pleasures of sense, and passionately strive after the nobler pleasures of heart and intellect. The mind which has once placed before it an ideal of life has a pole-star by which to steer, although his actual course will be determined by the winds and waves. The polestar is not the helm, nor is the helm more than one of the active agents. Our passions and our ignorance constantly make us swerve from the path to which the pole-star points, yet who denies that such ideals are very potent influences in every soul that has already conceived them?

—*G. H. Lewes.*

Self-Control

Self-control will place a man among the gods; the want of it will drive him into the dark abyss.

Let it be guarded as a treasure; there is no greater source of good for man than that though he guard nothing else, he guards his tongue.

The wound burnt in by fire may heal; but a wound burnt in by the tongue will never heal. One word of evil intent will change good into evil.

He who like a tortoise can draw in his five senses will obtain happiness.

Virtue seeking for an opportunity will come into the path of the man who guards against anger and has learned self-restraint.

All other creatures will worship him who has attained the control of his own soul.

—*Hindu.*

Devotion, False and True

The sobs and cries of the devout religious man evoke the derision of the man of the world. And herein the man of the world is the teacher of the religious man. Sobs and cries are the external manifestation of a troubled spirit; while a perception of the presence of the One True God, within and without, in the mind and in the Universe – God invested with his glorious and infinite attributes, God the supreme light, life and joy, – induces an ineffable tranquillity, serenity and joy in the spirit. A person who thus realises the presence of God is “the friend of all creatures, does not hate any body and is full of sympathy for all; he is free from arrogance and pride, equanimous in joys and griefs, forgiving and always contented; he possesses self-control and a firm will.” If therefore, a man is not led astray by false doctrines and false religious exercises, his devotion should thoroughly reform his spirit and make him a better man in every respect. If, however, this effect is not produced, his devotion is not true; it is simply a momentary frenzy that comes over him. True devotion is the harmonious development of the whole man. It is a masculine and not an effeminate sentiment. It springs from the practical realization of Divine truth, arrived at by the exercise of all our faculties, and purifies and elevates the whole nature of man. It is like a bright lamp burning steadily in a quiet place. Sobs and cries are often associated with a meanness, littleness and sinfulness of heart. They do not reform the spirit or produce a permanent effect on the character. They proceed from a momentary frenzy; and are due to the grotesque proportions which partial religious truth or one religious idea assumes, in the intellectual vision of the devotee. They spring from a sentiment which is essentially effeminate; they certainly are no indication of true piety and true religious progress. A tear of joy may or does stand to the eye when the devotee realizes the presence of the Universal Soul in his infinitude and glory; or of sorrow at the thought that he should be such an unworthy son of such a merciful and loving father; or that, buried in the low concerns of life he should have been so distant from the real home of his soul, the source of such joy and tranquillity. But these tears are of a quieting nature; they pacify the soul and do not disturb it; and they never assume the tumultuous form of sobs and cries.

Earth and the Sun, and some three hundred and fifty-five thousand times, and with the literally countless myriads of fixed stars, each of them a sun having a system of its own and some so large as to fill up the orbit of the earth, the mean radius of which is 95 millions of miles. The earth which is but a drop in the ocean of this material existence, is itself vast to us with its countries and continents, mountains and plateaus, seas and oceans. And what a variety of creatures dwell on its surface from the lowest insect to the highest man; and how innumerable! And this whole Universe is going on, each unit obeying the laws imposed upon it; and going on it has been for millions upon millions of years,—for eternity. There was a time when the earth was not a fit residence for living creatures—a time when huge forests alone existed;—a time when large reptiles were its only inhabitants; and last of all, after many revolutions had taken place, came man. And how many generations of man have lived and died since man began to dwell on this earth; and where are they now? What then is an individual man and his affairs in this infinite sea of existence and the duration of his life in this sea of eternity! Well may the desponding heart of a man ask, “Does the Creator and Ruler of this vast mass really care for the insufferable troubles and sorrows of such a miserable creature as I am,—of a mere nothing? And am I to live, suffer, die and begone and leave as little trace as a grain of sand on the sea-shore when removed from it?” And when he thinks so, “tears from the depth of some divine despair rise in the heart and gather to the eyes.” But in the depth of this despair, a cheering voice makes itself, at first faintly, heard; and then goes on becoming louder and lustier. “A mere nothing as I am, do I not possess that in me which enables me to contemplate this vastness of the Universe, to find order in this infinite expanse, and to appreciate its grandeur and magnificence? Does not the whole of external Nature, the earth with her rocks, mountains, rivers and oceans and the sky with its starry expanse, its radiant sun and benignant moon appeal in the softest and kindest of manner to my heart? Does it not, by its ineffable beauty, drive away all painful thought and melt my heart into serene joy? Does it not raise me above my mortality and transform me into “a living soul”, and allow me a glimpse as it were into the eternity of life and joy? And am I not so constituted as to conceive perfect goodness and perfect bliss? Insignificant as I am, the spirit that reigns in the

universe and manifests itself to me is a spirit akin to mine, and sympathises with me. There is no discord between us, there is perfect harmony. Our close relationship is clear and distinct. In the words of the Upanishad, the Supreme Soul and the human Soul are "two birds the friends and companions of each other living on the same (Pippala) tree (of the Universe). One of them eats the sweet fruits of the tree; the other looks on, (superintends)." If such is our close relationship, shall I be left to mourn in solitude, uncared for? No, I am in good company. My condition is not helpless. Though I suffer now, things must be right and will appear right. "On that same tree" continues the Upanishad, "the human soul, ignorant of the truth and being overwhelmed mourns on account of its weakness, but when it sees, it is in the company of the other who is powerful and comprehends the greatness of that other, it is free from sorrow."

Spirituality in Phrases

Phrases have always a deep spiritual meaning, which unfortunately is not understood by those who repeat them. Take, for example the well-known phrase *Jaya Deva! Jaya Deva!* The words mean Victory to God! Thousands and thousands repeat them, perhaps daily, and some may even have a hazy belief that they signify a wish that victory shall attend on God, without however there being any necessary connection between the victory proclaimed and the person proclaiming it. In point of fact, however, the words have no intelligible and useful sense except when the connection between the victory proclaimed and the person proclaiming it, is properly understood, remembered and acted upon. The connection is obvious. Whether there is or is not a personal head of the powers of the evil, no one denies that we are all surrounded by powers of evil in this world. Our whole life is but a football for them, unless it is rescued from their influences. This rescue and freedom from them is the object at which all men wishing to be good, aim. The object is not easily attained and the victory easily won. It is a daily, indeed hourly struggle, for victory between the powers of good and the powers of evil,—in other words, between God (as represented by His spirit in us) and what is not God. And every hour, every

moment; we have to choose between and declare ourselves as standing by the standard of God or the standard of evil. Shall we proclaim victory to God or victory to evil? And the accumulated wisdom and inspiration of ages have been firm in their proclamation that Victory shall be God's (Jaya Deva) and not of evil! That is, God's law and not the fascination of the Evil Powers shall guide our footsteps in this world of trials.

It is never before its time to do good ✓

Whenever it is sought to introduce a reform for the good of the people either by Government or by a leader of the people themselves, the remark is often made by those who profess to know the stage of development the people have reached, that the reform is before its time, or, that the people are not prepared for it. As a matter of fact those who say so are often the very persons who are least in touch with the people and who know next to nothing of their wants and aspirations. Taking for granted that what they say is true, wherein, we ask, lies the wisdom of attempting to hold back from the people a reform which is calculated to better their condition and to give a new complexion to their life? To wait for the growth of public opinion in favour of a reform and then to talk of introducing it, is ludicrous in itself. If people as a whole are prepared to do a certain thing, it requires no telling them to do it. Those therefore who put forth the excuse of want of preparedness on the part of the people, to delay reform, must be said to have very vague notions of the responsibility which they as educated Indians, owe to their less fortunate brethren. If we are to wait for the creation of public opinion in favour of a reform and then think of introducing it, we are afraid we shall have to wait till doomsday before it is carried out. If Government had waited till public sentiment was roused against the heinous customs of Sati, and Infanticide, our wives would yet have been burnt on our funeral pyres and we would yet have gone on murdering our innocent little children under the name of religion! If Government had stopped to see public opinion growing in favour of the Age of Consent Bill, it would have been perhaps one more century before we would have learnt to be less brutal to our unfortunate, tender, girlwives! So also

in matters concerning our religion and social usages, if we are to wait till public opinion expresses itself in favour of reforming them, we may have to wait and wait until perhaps we saw gradually forces working in directions and in a manner which we least anticipated. Persons who say "not too fast," "at less speed," "take the people with you," forget that instead of serving their countrymen, they unconsciously thus retard progress and only promote a spirit of hostility in them to every reform, however much good it may be calculated to do to them. To those who sincerely love their country and really desire the welfare of their countrymen, we shall only say that there should be no variation of speed in any really good work. We can never be too fast or before its time in doing good, be it in the form of the spread of education or true religion, for the latter can be better understood and intelligently accepted if the former has been allowed full play in the mind of the individual whose good it is sought to promote.

—V. S. S.

The Finite and the Infinite

It is represented by a certain class of philosophers that the gradual enlargement of the range of human thought renders the existence of God impossible. Ignorance has much to do with human faiths, and the inability to account for phenomena, renders recourse to the supernatural inevitable. As the clouds of ignorance are chased away and things formerly inexplicable become simple and axiomatic, the faith in the supernatural evidently declines, and so much ground conquered from the region of the unknowable, becomes part and parcel of the domain of positive science. Thus day by day God becomes unnecessary and may safely be relegated to mythland as the last great delusion of the human mind. It does not cost theologians many efforts to combat an argument like this. That the human mind will ever be able to arrive at the absolute truth regarding phenomena, is what we deny; that a knowledge of God's world would make God useless is what we may safely reject. Whatever man's power may be, there is an infinite power beyond him which he can not grasp; whatever his knowledge, there are more things in heaven and earth than even his philosophy dreams of. His very nature, indeed, supposes a Divine nature. If we are asked

to state why God exists, we shall answer because we exist. The very idea of man necessitates the idea of Divinity. The two are dependent upon each other. We set no store upon such arguments as design, Divine revelation, etc. We do not believe in God merely because we see design in the creation. When the primitive man first believed in God, he certainly did not syllogise or arrive at his conception by a long process of reduction. He stood in his extreme simplicity and helplessness a frail, finite being, feeling the pressure of the infinite on every side around him. Who sent him here? This was his first question and his last, and he answered it according to the data supplied on his own existence. No voice from heaven came down to inform him of his position in this world nor apprised him of a creator wiser and more powerful than he. His own nature informed him of this. He saw himself, he was conscious of his mental state, he observed, he heard, he felt; and his very sense brought home to his mind the existence of an infinite God, superior to himself. It is true that he did not see the infinite, as he saw the things around him. Some may say that the true knowledge of infinity was an impossibility with him, for how could a negative idea give him a positive God? Man, according to them, deals with the sense, and visible and perceptible objects are all that lie ~~within~~ the province of his intellect. God or the infinite must be unknown and unknowable. Ask your heart, however, whether all this is true or not. Can man by any effort on his part divest himself of the infinite? Who does not, every now and then, attempt to soar into space and, soaring till the wings of his imagination are exhausted wish there were an end or a limit to the world? And having arrived at this limit admit that there must be space beyond even that limit? Thus the furthest extremity or limit that you may conceive, must be bounded by the infinite. The exhausted senses themselves when unable to go further, admit the existence of the infinite. You know it, you feel it, though you cannot grasp it. Thus the primitive man, seeing and feeling what his senses suggested, found that beyond the horizon of his immediate perception, there was an infinite beyond him. He saw things which he could not understand; he measured his own power which was incompetent to cope with the mighty forces playing everywhere around him. He soared into the region of perception, into the region of power, and arrived at the utmost limit which his unaided

intellect could suggest. Beyond that he could not go; but he felt, he was forced to feel, that there was an infinite combining both power and space. This perception of the infinite developed into worship and faith. But it may be said that the god or gods of the ancients were finite beings, not infinite, having forms and bodies entirely limited by space. No. The God of the first believer was as infinite as our own. Even the embodied spirit which he worshipped was omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. The only difference between the infinite of the ancient and that of the modern believer is as to limit, where the finite ended and infinite began. We know more than the ancients. The first perception of the primitive believer has been enlarging itself in gradually widening circles till the largest circle has been reached which represents the bounds of modern perception. Where the first believer brought in the aid of the supernatural to account for things, we have science and law to direct and enlighten us. The horizon of our perception has increased, and it will go on increasing. But whatever the size or the rate of its increase, there can be no doubt that we must stop somewhere, and even where we stop, there is the infinite to press us on all sides. Thus try as we may, it is impossible to divest ourselves of the infinite. Our ignorance, our finite nature is the condition under which infinity becomes recognisable by us; and this condition will exist as long as we live and will not be affected by any amount of knowledge that we may acquire or any progress towards the infinite that we may make. The infinite, however great, must feel the pressure of the infinite, at all times and under all circumstances. Thus our belief in God remains, in the language of mathematics, a constant quantity, unaffected by the state of our knowledge or existence.

Home, First

Living for others means first living for ourselves. Charity must begin at home. If we have found a treasure, let it be in the form of wordly riches or some high and noble principles of life and conduct or in the form of the true religion, our first duty is to keep a sufficient portion of it for ourselves and our family and then to distribute the surplus to others. A man who overlooks his own family, leaves

it to its fate and tries to reach the world at its expense, has no idea of what a life for others means. Whenever we have found something, which we think to be precious, let our first impulse be to share it with our family. We do not say that our charities and goodness should end with our home; they must go out to others, but only after the home has had a full share of them. The mistake which some people make is that while they want to reform others, they do not want to reform themselves and their own families. Every attempt of this kind must at best be a ridiculous and disgraceful performance. To be more direct, if we believe that the principles of our Church are good, if we believe that they are the principles of a living religion, it is our first duty to go and act them in our life, to speak of them to our family and so to influence it by our preaching and conduct, as to make it accept and follow them along with ourselves. Having done our duty by ourselves and our families, by those who are nearest and dearest to us, by the darlings of our home, let us turn our attention to the needs of others. But let us not make the ridiculous and fruitless attempt of reaching others before reaching ourselves and our families. In other words, let us make our home, the first field of our labour, because duty requires it of us; and because it is there that we have a better and surer chance of success than in the outer world.

—V. S. S.

The Highest Happiness

Long is the night to him who is awake; long is a mile to him who is tired; long is life to the foolish who do not know the true law.

‘These sons belong to me, and this wealth belongs to me,’ with such thoughts a fool is tormented. He himself does not belong to himself, how much less sons and wealth?

The fool who knows his foolishness is wise at least so far. But a fool who thinks himself wise, he is called a fool indeed.

Let no man think lightly of evil, saying in his heart, it will not come nigh unto me. Even by the falling of water drops a waterpot is filled.

If a man offend a harmless, pure, and innocent person, the evil falls back upon the fool, like light dust thrown up against the wind.

There is no fire like passion; there is no depravity like hatred; there is no pain like this body; there is no happiness higher than rest.

Health is the greatest of gifts, contentment is the best riches; trust is the best of relationships; *Nirvana** the highest happiness.

—*Dhammapada*.

*Highest Happiness.

Action and Meditation

The Vedic religion was a religion of action, of works. But in time so much importance came to be attached to the works, the sacrificial system grew so complicated and occupied men so much, that a re-action arose and Buddhism declared that without purity of heart, without freedom from passion, and without meditation on the freed and happiest condition of the soul, eternal bliss cannot be attained. Buddhism did not acknowledge a supreme soul. Those who did, transferred the meditation on God, the source of all right, life and joy, and in other respects agreed with Buddhism. These, then were two opposing principles in Indian religious thought, action on the one hand, and purity of heart and meditation on the other. The reconciliation of these was effected by the Bhagvadgita. It says that a renunciation of action which is necessary for a life of meditation is impossible; for you cannot live without action. "Not even for a moment, can a man remain inactive, i. e. without doing something." Then if you forcibly renounce all action at once, the effect will be that you will do nothing externally but your mind will be busy thinking of the things you have left; and thus the renunciation will be unreal; and you will not succeed in the process of meditation. Therefore, have recourse to action, but take care that the world and the various objects, amongst which you are moving do not render your heart callous and impervious to higher thought and higher influences. Therefore, in whatever you do, do not seek your own private interest; do not propose to yourself a worldly end. Let the motive of all your action be to please God; you should do everything that you do solely because it is God's will that you should do it; act in God, eat in God, sleep in God, do your duties in God, howsoever disagreeable they may be. Thus then the effect of action which is to tie you down to the world and its objects of pleasure, will be neutralized; the motive

from which you do everything will carry you away from the world and fix you in God; and even in the midst of your busiest worldly occupations, you will be a Yogi with your heart resting on the great Soul of the Universe. Your appetites, your desires, and your passions will, by such a course of discipline, learn to subordinate themselves to the will of God and to the joys of communion with Him; and thus you will gradually be free from their disturbing influence, and attain purity and tranquility. And when in this condition of heart, heaven will shine upon on all sides, and you will behold the face of God, with its ineffable sweetness and lustre; and be as it were absorbed in His Presence. "In this way", adds the Gita, "King Janaka and others accomplished the purpose of their existence, by action."

God in the Heart of Man

The infinite in its truth is at the root of man's intellectual or cognitive nature; the perfectly good, at that of his moral nature; the perfectly beautiful is the basis of his æsthetic nature and the perfectly happy or blissful, of his happiness-loving nature. These, in his present, finite, sinful, deformed and sorrowful condition, he cannot realize. But he is always attended by the glorious vision, and to seek the realization of it is the object of his life on earth. He is never satisfied with the amount of knowledge he has got, he always tries to penetrate deeper and deeper into the secrets of nature. The good that he finds in actual life does not satisfy his nature; hence his endeavours to realize greater good in an imaginary life, by means of poetry and fiction; and hence also the progress of the race, to a still better condition, from barbarity to humanity. His vision of perfect beauty is not seen in a condition of reality anywhere; hence his attempts to put it into that condition, by means of architecture, sculpture and painting. Perfect bliss, he cannot find hence his representations of it is works of imagination and his untiring search of it in actual life, by means of a variety of plans and schemes. The history of man's existence on the globe, the history of his civilization, is the history of his endeavours to find the infinite, the good, the beautiful and the blissful. Thus God sits enthroned in the deepest recesses of man's heart; He attends him everywhere and guides his steps, and is the goal of his wordly race. But though so

near, the ordinary man of the world, the gross materialist, the seeker of mere sensual pleasure, sees him not; all his life is as it were directed to shake Him off, to pluck Him out of his bosom. But God will not be so shaken off, will not be plucked out. And sooner or later, ruin and repentance must overtake the man in this world. The pious and humble devotee, however, sees Him by the eye of faith, grasps Him by the force of contemplation, and worships Him, and dedicating his whole soul to Him, becomes, as it were, absorbed in Him and attains peace and happiness. "Those wise men alone" says the Upanishad, "and others attain everlasting peace, who see in themselves Him who amidst all these fleeting things is eternal, is the life of life, and being one, fulfils the desires of many. His form is not in the range of sight, no one sees Him with the eye, but those who apprehend Him as seated in the heart, by the heart itself and by the mind (contemplation) become immortal."

A Scientific Catechism

What are you?—I am a being alive and conscious on this earth, my ancestors having ascended by gradual process from lower forms of animal life and with struggle beyond man.

What is the distinctive character of manhood?—Responsibility for one's acts, having acquired the power of choosing between good and evil.

What is good and evil?—Good is that which promotes development, and is in harmony with the will of God. Evil retards or frustrates development.

What is the duty of man?—To assist his fellows to develop his own higher self, to strive towards good, to seek, to know the laws of nature and obey the will of God.

How does man know good from evil?—His own nature when uncorrupted is sufficiently in tune with the universe to enable him to be well aware in general of what is pleasing and displeasing to the guiding Spirit of which he himself should be a real and effective portion.

What is sin?—Sin is the deliberate and wilful act of a free agent who sees the better and chooses the worse. The root sin is selfishness.

How comes it, that evil exists?—Acts and thoughts are evil when they are below the normal standard attained by humanity. The possibility of evil is the necessary consequence of a rise in the scale of moral existence: just as an organism whose normal temperature is far above 'absolute zero' is necessarily liable to damaging and deadly cold. But cold is not in itself a positive or created thing.

Are there beings lower than man?—Multitudes.

Are there beings higher than man?—We may be sure that in some of the innumerable worlds circulating round those distant suns there must be beings far higher in the scale of existence than ourselves; indeed we have no knowledge which enables us to assert the absence of intelligence anywhere.

What caused and maintains existence?—Of our own knowledge we are unable to realize the meaning of origination and maintenance, but we conceive that there must be some Intelligence supreme over the whole process of evolution, else things could not be as organised and as beautiful as they are.

How may we become informed concerning things too high for our own knowledge?—We should strive to learn from the great teachers, the prophets and poets and saints of the human race, whose writings are opened up to us by education.

What is "the Communion of saints"?—Higher and holier beings must possess in fuller fruition those privileges of communion which are already foreshadowed by our own faculties of language, of sympathy and of mutual aid; and just as we find that our power of friendly help is not altogether limited to our own order of being so. I conceive the existence of a mighty fellowship of love and service.

What do you Understand by Prayer?—I understand that our spirits are attuned to the Spirit of Righteousness, our hopes and aspirations exert an influence far beyond their conscious range, and in a true sense bring us into communion with our Heavenly Father.

—V. R. S. in *Hibbert Journal*.

The Eye and The Spirit

Mysterious is the world—as mysterious now as it was to the first thinking human being who saw the sky over his head with the bright

sun careering his way through it in his glory, and the earth below with its vast expanse of waters, the towering mountains, the roaring cataracts, the flowing rivers, with trees and plants, birds and beasts innumerable, and with himself and his race. And in this world he beheld the power and glory of his Almighty God. But he was ignorant and we are wise. We have penetrated into the secrets of the world; and find that it is nothing but the result of the play of certain forces acting over certain kinds of matter. The energy which propels a body through space becomes, when arrested, transformed into heat, heat into electricity, electricity into magnetism. There is a chemical affinity between certain substances, which represents a certain amount of energy in those substances, when they unite, it is neutralized, but the energy is transformed into heat; this heat boils water and converts it into vapour which represents that energy. If the vapour is allowed to escape, it communicates its heat to the air and the bodies with which it comes in contact, and after a time when it has parted away with it, becomes water again. If, however, it is confined in a certain space, the heat energy assumes the form of a propelling force which moves our ships and carriages. When certain elementary substances, carbon, oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen combine in certain proportions, their chemical affinity is transformed into vitality, and the molecule so formed lives and grows. Several other living molecules are conglomerated with it, and thus we come to have living bodies. Gradually, by further transformation of the same energy, that is, by the process of evolution as it is called, we come to have fishes, birds, beasts, and last of all, man whose immediate ancestor was the ape. Thus, then, thinks the physicist, he has solved the riddle of the world by reducing everything to the transformation and persistence of force, as it is called. The human soul is as much the product of the chemical combinations that produce the phenomenon of life, as heat or electricity; and like these is not a free agent. The belief in God is a superstition unworthy of the intelligence of the age. But is the riddle really solved? The force which causes motion can become heat only under certain circumstances; heat can become electricity only under certain circumstances; and all the other various transformations do require fitting circumstances. Who arranges these circumstances in the laboratory of the world? Are these adapted simply by accident? If so, the question between

theists and modern physicists is the old one, whether the world in which we find such order and design is the work of an accident or of an intelligent cause. And there is one phenomenon that of life, which no accident can cause. The proportion in which oxygen, hydrogen and the rest are found combined in a living body is not the proportion in which they ordinarily combine. Nothing that we are acquainted with, can make them combine in that proportion at such a temperature as is compatible with the existence of life. As soon as life is extinct, especially in the higher forms of it, the elements enter into new combinations and form such compounds as we find in the inorganic world. So that it seems that the principle or energy of life, so far from being a transformation of the chemical energy of these elements, is necessary to bring that energy into play; to force the elements to enter into combination with each other in that proportion, against the law which, when left to themselves, they always obey. Thus life is prior to chemical combination and is not the result of it. And what are this energy and its various forms, and what is matter on which they act? Do we know anything about them *per se*? What we know are phenomena alone. A certain quantity of matter presenting the usual phenomenon of heat is brought into contact with one of the ends of an arrangement of metallic bars, the two wires attached to the two ends of that arrangement are connected with the ends of another wire several miles long, coiled round a piece of iron and then that piece of iron immediately draws towards itself another piece of iron. This is all that we know. What has taken place in the interval? A simple uninstructed man would say a spirit has entered that piece of iron; and we shall laugh at him. But are our hypothesis any better? What is our heat, and what the electricity and the magnetism into which it is successively converted? Do we know anything about them? Are they not creatures of imagination, owing their origin as much to the necessity of our finite intellect, as the spirit of the uninstructed man? If we do not understand these, much less possible is it for us, to understand life and the human soul. Is the riddle then solved? No, presumptuous man, it is not; it cannot be solved by you. Your only means of knowledge is the eye which gives you information about the colour, and shape, and sometimes the other four senses, from which too you derive only specific and limited

knowledge. And with these instruments you are going to gauge the subtleties of the world. You cannot. Be humble. If there is anything in you that will show you the way to penetrate into the mystery of the world, it is your spirit—that spirit which aspires to infinity and eternity, that discovers order, beauty, sublimity, greatness, purity, goodness and joy in the Universe, and sees the Great Spirit—its father reigning in his might and majesty. Do by all means, use your eye and discover phenomena, but do not be presumptuous and think you have discovered the secret. The eye cannot supersede or destroy the spirit whose apprehension is infinitely higher. It is the spirit that guides us in the discovery of the highest truth, and the men who avail themselves of this instrument and advance our knowledge of that truth are the *Yogis* (the seers) the prophets, and the philosophic poets of the world.

What is Prayer?

It is the attempt of the human soul to communicate direct with the living spirit of God. This communication is real and vivid in proportion to the intensity and depth of the faith of the devotee. The more ardent is his devotion to God, the more spontaneous and natural are his acts of worship. The more sincere is his love of God, the more blissful does his communion with God become. In one hymn, Tukaram prays that whenever he remembers God, his mind and heart may be full of intense love; and that will be possible only when the presence of God is vividly realised. The two things are interdependent—the love of God and the realisation of His presence. We, men of little faith, realise it very faintly in our most earnest prayers and, on the other hand, because of this faintness, our prayers do not give rise to true love and emotion in our hearts.

Conflict between Religion and Science

There is, we think, no conflict between Science and Religion and there cannot be any. The spirit of man, when brought face to face with the Universe and with himself, sees another Spirit of immense power, ineffable glory, and unsearchable wisdom reigning in the Universe; and apprehends him as the spirit of truth, goodness

and beauty ; the source of joy, light and life, a spirit that sympathises fully with his own, raises and elevates his spirit, and is the father of his spirit. The eye of man assisted by the generalising faculty discovers certain phenomena and their sequences. It cannot penetrate under the veil of phenomena, cannot find out why one set of phenomena is followed by another and can give no information as to the nature of the secret working that is going on. The word force has been invented to conceal this ignorance, force which, scientists say, acting upon matter, the nature of which also is an unfathomable secret, has produced or evolved the world in the course of time. The province of the spirit is distinct from the province of the eye. There is no conflict between religion—the outcome of the spirit and Science—the outcome of the eye, as long as each keeps itself within its own province. If the spirit instead of dealing with man and the world as a whole, enters into details and dogmatises about things which form the peculiar province of the eye, the eye has a right to turn against it and warn it off. And if the eye forgets the essentially limited nature of its powers and instead of confining itself to detail, attempts to grapple with man and the Universe as a whole and dogmatises about matters which form the peculiar province of the spirit, the spirit has a right indignantly to turn against it and drive it away. The world has suffered a good deal from religious dogmatism. But science, while it has contributed to deliver it from this dogmatism, is now going to impose its own ; and if it succeeds, the consequences, we think, are likely to be more disastrous than those which religious dogmatism has produced. It, therefore, behoves all who love God's truth, to withstand the one as resolutely as the other.

Moods and Prayer

There are probably a large number of people who say that they cannot pray but when the mood is upon them. That is one reason amongst others why these men do not have daily worship for themselves as well as for their families. To such prayer is a matter of moods. Often it happens that when they make this supreme duty of man so dependent, it becomes rare and ultimately it ceases to be. For days and months and even years such people go without prayers

and still they believe that they are in a right state of mind and that there is nothing particularly wrong with them. We think such a state indeed a dangerous one. In our eyes prayer and daily worship is the first and foremost duty of man which has to be performed under any circumstances and in spite of all moods to the contrary. Prayer transcends all the limitations imposed upon man by his circumstances, desires, moods etc. Rather it is the only liberating force given to man with which he can conquer himself and make himself ultimately free and master of all his moods and desires. Therefore he should practise daily prayer, taking it to be obligatory upon him to do so and counting the neglect of it as sin. When we have done this for a long time, prayer becomes habitual to us and yields its supreme joy. At first it may be even dry but that is no reason why we should give it up. We do not pray for the joy thereof, but because we must pray, ought to pray, cannot help praying.

There is another class of people who think mistakenly that they have been praying always, even while they are working, for their heart is set on God as they say; therefore they have not much need of regular prayer. This too we consider a dangerous doctrine, fraught with evil results to the individual himself and to the society. In fact those who say so do not know what a difficult task true prayer is. It requires a perfect concentration of all the powers of the soul on the inmost parts of the soul where the soul meets its Over-Lord and supplicates Him to remove all its imperfections and greatest needs. Prayer is the greatest of all actions of man as it is his greatest duty, and hence it cannot be done in any hurry or in a light manner. If we may say so, it is the greatest of all arts, the art of building character and has to be cultivated essentially as such. And once a man has begun to build his life on the foundation of prayer and worship, he will realise how his life progresses from harmonies to greater harmonies of purity, wisdom and love until his whole life becomes but one great prayer and sacrament, full of the blessedness of heaven. But to attain this end, man has to persevere very long in the practice of prayer, has to do it solely as a matter of duty and of necessity, perhaps for years before he tastes of the true sweetness thereof. Hence let all those who may have given up the habit of daily prayer and worship of God, or who may not have as yet begun it, do so as early as they can without much loss of time, for therein they will find abounding peace and joy, wisdom and holiness.

God's working hand

There is a class of philosophers who maintain that the Universe goes on merely by virtue of a system of laws framed by its Creator when all things were made in the beginning. They thus admit that God did create the Universe and even allow that it is full of living order, harmony and beauty, but deny any immediate interference from the Deity with its affairs. He is now perfectly indifferent to its concerns. He holds Himself aloof whether from man or from nature and has no hand at work in their guidance. The code of laws He has given the Universe is unalterable and fixed, no change whatever is possible here. Everything is pre-destined and pre-arranged, and the world's only course is passive obedience to these laws.

The pernicious effects of this theory cannot be exaggerated. It is the fruitful parent of multifarious evils. Indifference, despondency and the consequent inevitable inaction, especially in the work of the elevation and regeneration of mankind, are its begotten off springs.

Without entering into an abstruse metaphysical disquisition, we will consider whether this theory is consistent with the conclusions that may be legitimately drawn from the undoubted existence of certain principles in our nature. There is in the heart of ~~man~~ a feeling of love; and there is a sphere in the external world on which it acts. As the eye has for its object things visual, so has love for its object things lovable. And the more the principle is refined and purified, the more it is educated and developed, the wider is the range of objects it embraces and the more constant is its exercise.

Now we could possess the principle of love only in common with our Maker, and the infinity of His attributes is without exception. Therefore, God is not only possessed of this attribute but it is eternal in Him and it acts in the eternity of space and time.

Again, it is seen that a man in respect of this principle strenuously exerts himself to watch carefully the well-being of those whom he loves. He would lay down his own life for the sake of his children, sacrifice any thing to save the life of a friend, go through any amount of hardship and misery in the exercise of benevolence and alleviate the suffering of distressed humanity at any cost. All this is for love—love alone, for nothing else would draw him forth to do these ennobling offices. All friendship, compassion, pity, charity,

sympathy, philanthropy, all that elevates a human being as a member of the family of man, have their origin in love. And if man's drop of love is capable of such wholesome action, of such wonderful influence how can then the Maker of this glorious Creation, who is the fountainhead of all love, the perennial well from which alone all the above virtues flow, how can He occupy a neutral ground, manifest no care for its prosperity and progress and stand unaffected by its concerns through eternity! No, He cannot, and He will not. And this His most glorious attribute is at work day and night. Man's productions, however trivial, engross his thought and care, and God certainly has not given birth to these wondrous worlds to leave them to their own fate and withdraw from them as soon as they were brought into existence.

He is not only the Creator but the father of all things and acts towards His creatures as a good wise human father would act, towards his children. Do not the ineffable glory of the countless stars, the heart-cheering moon-light, the genial sun-shine, the luxuriant growth of vegetation, the majesty of the ocean, do not all these speak a living soul, a quickening power, a life-instilling breath and a parental care in them? The heart revolts instinctively from anything that divests the Universe of its only life, light and joy,—God's ever-working dispensation—and makes it a mere dead machinery.

It is the attribute of love that recognises God's eternal care for His creatures. It is leaving out of consideration this the most glorious of God's attributes that worketh such mischief. We must therefore learn and remember that God is Love and is always by us. It is He who gives us the daily bread which we eat and the raiment which we wear. It is He who sends down rain from heaven and supplies rivers with water. It is He who makes the sun rise daily in the morning and warm our being and animate nature. He does not only concern Himself with the Lower Creation outside us and with our physical concerns, but the elevation and regeneration of our hearts is His especial care. It is He alone who wipes off our penitential tears, assuages our afflicted hearts, listens to our prayers, takes away our sins and promises salvation. Without His ever-present love and quickening soul we could not have sustained our being for a moment, and all would look a tremendous ghastly carcass, God is the only guardian deity of all and under His tender care we move and have our being.

The Light of Truth

When the soul sees the light of truth, it vividly perceives that God alone is life, and without Him everywhere is untruth or death. Man is born to enjoy truth, love and life, time without end ; but when he loses his health, he begins to love untruth, darkness and death. Take for instance his love of matter or material pleasures. As a child of the Supreme Spirit he is born to love spirit and spiritual pleasures ; but when he sins and forgets his high parentage, he degrades himself into a base lover of matter. The matter becomes his god. He calls it his home, guardian, father, mother, brother, sister, friend, wife or the only source of happiness. Through sin he becomes blind. He puts on a black veil before him, and cannot see the blazing sun of righteousness which encompasses him. Through materialism he transmigrates himself into a material organism, and there remains no spiritual vitality in him. He is as spiritless, cold and lifeless as dead matter. The character of the object which he worships, secretly influences his own character. How can he be better than the object of his worship ? We know matter is the very symbol of unreality, as it is totally devoid of consciousness or life. To love matter and material pleasures is to love unreality or death. This love is an abomination in the sight of God. The loving child of God abhors to cherish in the slightest degree regard for any earthly pleasures. He eats, drinks and uses many material things ; but to the eye of his faith, matter loses its dull materiality. He does not see matter anywhere, in food, in water, and even in the very flesh of his body he beholds the varied rays of his God's light. To him all natural phenomena are the clear expressions of God's loving wisdom. He beholds heaven on earth, or God in everything. He drinks in God's light everywhere. He loaths to enjoy any material thing. He detests sensuality from the very core of his heart. In truth and in spirit he eats God's wisdom, he drinks God's love, and he enjoys God's purity. He will not see even the most beautiful face, he will not hear even the sweetest song, and he will not touch even the loveliest thing without the approbation of his conscience. The light of truth thus enlightens and purifies the whole man.

Kabir

The place and the date of his birth are not accurately known. In Duff's Chronology of India, he is placed in the end of the 15th



Kabir

century (1490). Several legends are connected with his birth, many of which are simply incredible. But it is true that he never knew his own parents and Nima, a Mahomedan weaver, is said to have brought him up.

He was dis-satisfied with the religion of his guardian and he could not suffer to see Hindus and Mahomedans running at each other's throats. His mind revolted at the intoleration and bigotry of the Mahomedans as well as at the idolatry of the Hindus. Long must he have thought over the existing religions before he formulated his own. It is very curious to note that Swami Ramanand—an orthodox Brahman, became his spiritual father. Under him he studied Vedanta and the higher philosophy of the Hindus.

Thus prepared he set up his own religion. It was remarkably simple and free from mysticism. Idolatry was carefully avoided. Egoism and vanity of the world were thoroughly condemned. Importance was given to unselfish and pure devotion of the heart. It was not a religion of the few, but the Hindus and the Mahomedans, the scholar and the layman alike drew near the fountain and allayed his spiritual thirst.

The religion of Kabir, even during his life-time, spread far and wide. Disciples from far off lands flocked to his cottage to fall at the feet of the great teacher. He welcomed them all and his hospitality was never slack. He taught them according to their capacities. He led the scholar through the hazy and the zig-zag path of the Vedanta but he taught the layman to forget the self, to cut off wicked desires and march through the narrow vale of morality "with heart within and God overhead." Had he been slightly disposed to enjoy worldly pleasures, there were among his devotees men of wealth, who would have heaped their fortunes at his feet. But he loved to live like a true saint and disdained princely luxuries—so greedily coveted by many modern religious guides! He had taken the vow of poverty and he lived in his little hut, weaving with the assistance of his family, cloth with which he purchased his livelihood. Though poor, his hospitality was remarkable. It is said that he once pawned his own wife to procure money to entertain a band of *Sadhus*, and then worked day and night to pay off the debt.

Such was the life of the great man, to whose saintly memory we should offer our tribute. Four centuries have elapsed since he passed

away from us, but his memory is still fresh in our minds. He was not a great figure in history but a saint—pure and devout. There lives no man in India who is more universally venerated. The Hindus and the Mahomedans, so diverse in other respects, vie with each other in their love for Kabir, because he loved them all. The ideal which Kabir must have steadily kept before him may be best expressed in the words of an English poet:—

“Pagodas, like as Mosques, are homes of prayer.
 'Tis prayer that Church-bells chime unto the air ;
 Yea, Church or Kaba, Rosary and Cross ;
 Are all but diverse tongues of world-wide prayer.”

Come Brother !

Forget the strife of rank and birth,
 Forget the forms of sect and race,
 There is *one* caste alone on earth,
Humanity!—in Love's embrace.
 The Love, brother, that makes us one,
 That lends us bliss and might ;
 The Love, brother, that can alone,
 Lead us on to Light.

Forget the clash of creed and creed,
 And all the man-made forms uncouth ;
 What pure and blessed faith to heed,
One God, *one* Church, *one* Race, *one* Truth !
 Come, brother in the Larger Light,
 The Light that shines on all ;
 Rise, O rise, to the just and right—
 The humbler higher call.

The psalm of Love, the song of praise,
 The notes of joy, O sing to Him;
 A nobler loftier temple raise,
 And join in the Universal Hymn.
 O come, brother, let us rejoice,
 Together side by side,
 We sit and raise to Him our voice,
 Our Father and our Guide.

—*Nandlal Muzumdar.*

Sacrifice

Sacrifice is the keynote of all moral precepts. You are asked to be truthful, just, kind, loving and charitable. Now nobody is untruthful without any cause. He hides the truth because he hopes to gain some profit or to prevent some loss thereby; and it is because, that is forbidden by the moral precept that there is such a strong temptation to disregard it. In being just the individual must be ready to give another what he deserves. And kindness, love and charity require a man to part with his possessions to do good to another out of the fulness of his heart. In declaring their faith the great men of the world have suffered great hardships and even lost their lives. This sacrifice involves the genuine assertion of the true self. The inner spirit asserts its own supremacy over the outer world. If the latter tries to overawe it by its physical greatness or allure it by its sensual gratification, the spirit would discard its physical environment, the physical frame in which it is encased, and the sensual pleasures which the latter involves. The conflict is between the two worlds moral and physical. The spirit rules in the former and dictates its laws; therefore these laws call on the human soul to know herself and to give up, to sacrifice the physical encumbrance.

Can You ?

Can you put the spider's web back in place
That once had been swept away ?
Can you put the apple again on the bough
Which fell at your feet to-day ?
Can you put the lily cup back on the stem,
And cause it to live and grow ?
Can you mend the butterfly's broken wing
That you crushed with a hasty blow ?
Can you put the bloom again on the grape,
And the grape again on the vine ?
Can you put the dewdrop back on the flowers,
And make them sparkle and shine ?
Can you put up the petals back on the rose ?
If you could, would it smell as sweet ?
Can you put the flour again in the husk,
And show me the ripened wheat ?

Can you put the kernel again in the nut,
 Or the broken egg in the shell ?
 Can you put the honey back in the comb ?
 And cover with wax each cell ?
 Can you put the perfume back in the vase
 When once it has sped away ?
 Can you put the cornstalk back on the corn,
 Or down on the catkins, say ?

You think my questions are trifling, dear ?
 Let me ask you another one :
 Can a hasty word ever be unsaid
 Or a deed unkind undone ?

The Upper Windows of the Soul

Our soul can very well be compared to a tower that has two sets of windows, one opening towards the earth and the other towards heaven. Allegory apart, our souls are endowed with two orders of faculties, one belonging to the animal part of our nature and the other to the spiritual. By one set we communicate with the world of senses and by the other with things that transcend them. Now there is diversity of opinions about the use and destinies of these faculties of the soul. There are not a few who would have us believe that the lower set were rather a mistake on the part of the Divine architect, that to despise them, ill-treat them, neglect them, to starve them, nay, if it is possible, even to crush them were in themselves acts of great virtue. Whereas others would have us shut up the upper windows altogether. Prayer, they say, is needless and communion immaterial. It is of little consequence whether we pray or do not pray, we are neither losers by the one nor gainers by the other. This class of men is to be found not only among materialists, sceptics, and unbelievers, but what is more strange and more lamentable, even among men who profess a belief in God and immortality. Devotion they look upon as superfluous exercise, consequently mere waste of time. They lay the greatest stress upon work, and almost no importance upon worship as a duty. But those who have ever prayed sincerely and held communion with the infinite spirit have quite other experiences to record. They must

have known occasions in their life, high moments of spiritual ecstasy, when through these upper windows of the soul that communion opens, they felt the sweet breath of the celestial spheres creeping over their spirits and mild light of heaven dawning upon their eyesight; in those moments truths that were often heard and often forgotten received strange confirmation; new truths that had long escaped spiritual perception flashed before their mental gaze and emotions that long slept in the inner chambers of the soul started into sudden life. Call this inspiration, call this the action of Divine grace on the soul of man, call it by any other name, it is what it is—it is a fact of devotional experience. It is necessary for our spiritual welfare that we should pay due regard to the culture of this faculty. At first we feel some difficulty in fettering down the opinions of the restless mind and lose ourselves in the contemplation of the Unseen, but habit and continued effort make it comparatively easy, till we enter upon a new sphere of spiritual life and learn to drink deep the joys of the unseen world.

A Child's Thought About God

God is not very far away,
 He knows each thing I do or say;
 In sun and stars His glories shine;
 He dwells within this heart of mine—
 He has no form that I can see,
 Yet everywhere appears to me,
 In rolling prairie, leafy wood,
 But more in friends so kind and good.
 I hear His voice in murmuring breeze,
 In splashing waves and whispering trees.
 In bleating flocks and lowing herds,
 But more in gentle, loving words.
 I need not go to heaven to see,
 The God who is so kind to me;
 The loneliest spot I need not fear,
 Since He, the Almighty, is so near.

—Kath Lawrence.

Seeing God (1)

There is an instinctive desire in human nature to know and see God. When man feels that there is one who rules over this vast universe, he naturally desires to see Him. When this desire is abnormal, it seeks its gratification in unreality. This is the main spring of the world's idolatry. But when cultivated reason and enlightened understanding discover the falsehood of idolatry, the human mind again strives with greater zeal and steadiness to behold the ever living and true God. The true devotees satisfy their inborn desire of communion by seeing the Real God, the idolaters by seeing false idols. The rationalists stand between these two classes. They do neither worship material things, nor do they worship Him in truth and in spirit. To them God is invisible, and, therefore, inconceivable. But the human heart disdains to abide by this conclusion of reason. It cannot rest satisfied without beholding God face to face. It pants for direct vision. Incapacity to see God is death to the true believer. Perish that false and proud religion which denies the direct perception of God.

Fate

Whenever the external world and circumstances run counter to the wishes of the individual, he often ascribes it to fate. Whatever that word means, it implies that in the particular situation he is over-powered and his resources are at an end. This attitude, which is natural when the forces of nature remind man of his physical weakness, has no place in the spiritual world. The life of the spirit involves free will. There the individual has full liberty to rise as high as he would. Whatever his particular lot may be, he can act and move in it so as to find spiritual comfort and inspiration. Rise and fall in that realm entirely depend on his personal efforts. If he is degenerating, it is because he deliberately takes false steps and does not mind the voice of his conscience. He debases himself when he can be great and good; when he can approach God in spirit and in His association learn to be pure and loving. Thus whether fortune smiles or frowns, it cannot rob the aspiring soul of her spiritual glory; and the great lesson which the lives of saints teach, is that in a truly religious life there is no such thing as fate.

The Superiority of Man

If therefore we are to seek the superiority of man over the brute creation, if we wish to find out in him an exclusive privilege denied altogether to the lower beings, it must be not in his rational nature which he but shares more or less with others, but in the mysteries of his Spiritual experiences. This new principle of life is as invariably absent in the lower orders of being as it is universally present in mankind. The savage and the sage, the sinner and the saint, the dull man in the street who dies and is forgotten and the genius who illumines history, all these bear their own witnesses to this new principle of life. It is not anti-rational or anti-emotional or anti-volitional but it is above all these. It is *the principle* of human nature and it determines humanity as such. As life is the determining principle of the vegetable world and mind that of the animal world, so spirit is the determining principle of the human world, more mysterious than either, yet not the less real. If there be men in whom this principle is not developed, they might be men but certainly not human. As the animal world is more physical and less mental so may the human world be more mental and less spiritual, yet it cannot be wholly unspiritual and hence the spiritual principle is the distinguishing feature of man.

Vegetable and Human Life

Trees, plants, etc., have a sort of life corresponding to human life, and that each of them has its ages of development. This development does not admit of any accurate definition and is known by its outward manifestation. These manifestations are first growth, second health, third tendency towards restoration and fourth decline. Trees as well as men receive nourishment from the material world, men draw their sustenance from the food they daily take as do the trees from the sap out of the earth. Now all this regards the physical life, but there is another life which is still more difficult of definition and that is the moral life, the life of the soul. As physical life passes through the stages already indicated, so does the moral life also. The soul that is pure and righteous enjoys all the health that the physical body does when free from any distemper or disorder. The health of the soul is manifested by inward satisfaction, and peace of mind. The soul has its disease like the physical life ; the disease of the soul is sin, but

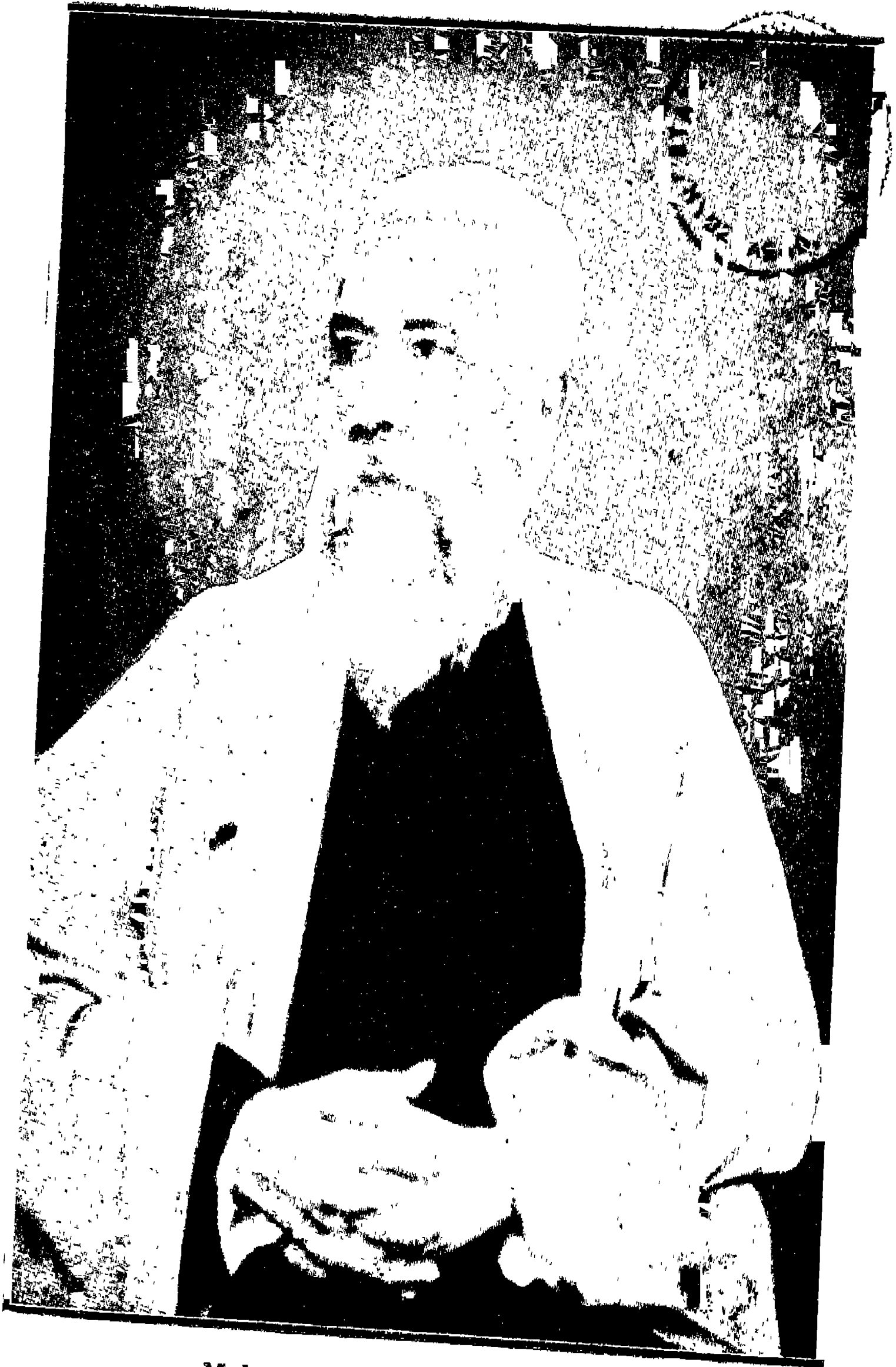
what is the sap or the nourishment the soul lives upon ? It is the contemplation of God, and living upon the contemplation of God is communing with the unseen world. Simple knowledge of God would not be a sufficient nourishment to the soul in the same way as mere sight of food would not nourish the body. The more we commune with God, the more we feel soul's coming within the dominion of righteousness, holiness and purity. These are the facts of our life. By surrendering our soul to the dominion of God, we attain salvation.

—S. N. S.

Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore

Devendra Nath Tagore ! happiness is thy name, happiness of the highest order and in the fullest measure !! Health, wealth and long life, name, fame and noble career, sons, grandsons and great grandsons of sparkling genius, and a whole community of thy making—of pure religion and perfect liberty—to bid thee farewell, and above all this crown of Nirwan as will become a veritable Buddha ! Blessed soul, thou passest on to eternity, and thy memory will forever remain a source of happiness to all who will know of thee—a harp without a hitch—a song to soothe the toiling world.

When we ordinarily speak of the Brahmo Samaj, we run in all readiness to the two extremes, Raja Ram Mohun Roy and Keshub Chandra Sen. For none of these as such was possible without the other. But who made them both what they are ? Ram Mohun laid the merest foundations and had to leave them to the tender mercy of the Fates. Keshub raised the superstructure, superb and complete though it be. But who paved and prepared the groundwork ? Who transformed the literary society of Ram Mohun with only a platform for occasional worship into a living church with actual membership, with vows and responsibilities ? Who purged a revived Vedantism into a pure and simple Theism ? Who turned what was only a theory or Universal Religion professed by the followers of the Raja, into a private experience of the soul to be put into a daily practice of the domestic and social life ? The 'Tatwabodhini Sabha' and the 'Tatwabodhini Patrika' of 1839, the best vernacular journal of the time, the solemn covenant of 1843 by



Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore

which the members were bound to cultivate a habit of daily prayer and give up idolatry and again the famous declaration of the fallibility of the scriptures, singular for its candour in the whole history of religious beliefs,—who called all these facts into being? And yet who represented to the present day the saintly and devotional side of the Brahmo Samaj which is so often charged of being too rational in its thought, too destructive in its methods and too secular in its reform? Who again was the most national of the so-called denationalized and denationalizing Brahmos? Oh, it was all our Maharshi who passed into his well earned rest on 19th January 1905.

We must not take final leave of our great patriarch without recalling most emphatically to our mind the two chief characteristics of his religious life. The first is that his religion was to him always an individual experience, a direct vision, a constant joy. And if he resorts to the Upanishads for inspiration, to use his own words, "Every word of these texts, is associated with some fact of my spiritual experience or other, and naturally calls forth the deepest emotions of the heart." Religion in these days is too often apt to prove after all a hidden form of Utilitarianism and is many times by its own friends dragged into the streets to seek a market value of its own. Without this it feels itself weak. It seeks to be Social Reform, philanthropy, or strenuous life—some means to an end outside itself but not a thing in itself and for itself. The religion that the Maharshi lived and for that matter all Rishis lived was an end and not a means howsoever high sounding. Secondly his attitude to the Brahmos in general is to be specially borne in mind by all Brahmos who are often so ready to fall out with each other. Once he gave, what he thought to be his last blessing.

"Go in unity ; speak in unity ; united know ye, each the heart of the other. As the Gods of old with one mind received each his offering due, be ye of one mind, even so." And he said "Forgetting that we are Adi Brahmos. Sadharan Brahmos &c.we must turn the whole strength of our souls on the grand thought that we are Brahmos." Although he was partly a cause of the first cessation, nobody felt it more than himself and ever since loved and from time to time blessed all the sections with a genuine love.

Reliance on God

Thy greatness passeth all we know :
 It struck the Vedas dumb.
 The mind, that with the speed of wind doth go,
 In search of Thee sinks lame and numb.
 The sun and moon, in all their glory
 Thy power in part display :
 Beyond reach is Thy wondrous story
 Of my wit's feeble ray.
 The Thousand-tongued* his fluence tried
 But tried in vain, they plead,
 To paint Thy glory, dimly spied :
 How can my mind succeed ?
 But we are children, and sure
 Thou art Mother to us all,
 O may Thy love, saith Tuka's pray'r,
 A shade protective fall.

—*Saint Tukaram*

Solitude (1)

"Inspiration is an inhabitant of the solitude," says one of the most thoughtful writers of the present day ; and there is much truth in the saying ; for it is only when we shake off the world from our soul and retire into the inmost recesses of our nature, that we perceive the divine relationship that binds the finite with the infinite, and establish the disturbed harmony of our spirit with the spirit of the universe. A course of life which has few opportunities of privacy or retirement is not favourable to the growth of deep piety and a devout spirit. A man who constantly lives an out-door life and whose walking moments are invaded by cares and engagements of the world is almost always marked by want of depth and solidity of character. Such a one must needs be shallow and superficial. He can seldom pursue a line of thought to its further length—he can seldom analyse a complex feeling to its component elements, he can seldom trace effects to their legitimate causes or causes to their legitimate consequences—seldom descend down into the bottom of his being and

*i. e. Sesha, a serpent who is supposed to support the earth on its head.

weigh and measure his frailties and weakness ; for his attention is constantly dissipated, his feelings are often ruffled and his judgment is often thrown out of its balance. There cannot be any real and lasting moral or spiritual growth without a careful examination of self, without a clear apprehension of one's own weaknesses and imperfections. The opinion of those amongst whom we live and move often hide our real nature from ourselves. We learn to look at ourselves with the eyes of others. Those diseases of the soul that require the careful removal of the thick sloughs of vanity, passion and prejudice, to behold them in their naked horridness, often escape our views, because they escape the view of the society, that guides and regulates our lives. It is indeed a sorrowful fact, that even the sincerest and most earnest minded men sometimes fall into such errors. Borne constantly upon the wings of popular applause, they lose the habit of merciless self-scrutiny and learn to judge themselves by the standards of others. The only remedy for such evils is occasional solitude—the encouragement of a habit of study and contemplation. Of course situated as we are, with our social and domestic duties calling for our attention every moment, our daily lives must chiefly consist of active work ; but the greater is the reason that we should counter-balance such a life by moments of deep and retired thought snatched from our pressing avocations. In fact, the plans of those active duties should be laid and the inspiration of strength and resolution to discharge them satisfactorily should be imbibed, during hours of lonely thought.

The want of solitary study that is so harmful in the departments of mere intellectual work, is almost fatal to the cause of real spiritual growth. Every theist who seeks the progress and the permanent welfare of his soul, should set apart at least some hours of the day for meditation, study, prayer, and self-examination. At those hours he should retire from the company of others, and try to probe his nature, revise his past history and character, mark the ways of divine grace in his life, and realize in the fullest extent his moral and spiritual wants. Prayer unattended by study and contemplation, is not productive of much good. Let every seeker then cultivate a habit of solitary study. In solitude let him weigh and measure himself and through prayer and communion which are essentially solitary in their nature, let him seek for strength, guidance. and help to discharge the duties of his life.

Seeing God (2)

The human soul is born to behold and enjoy the formless beauty of God. God is training up every soul for this purpose. No one can attain peace or salvation without directly seeing God. But how can we see the Unseen or Invisible God? He is no matter. He has no image, and therefore transcends our senses. God is neither stone, nor water, neither light, nor darkness. Then what is He? Some imagine Him as something like material light; but He is no such thing. In fact, He is nothing, He is unlike any created thing. He is only a solemn presence. If you really desire to see God, only admit with full faith that God is. To feel His living presence is to see Him. What you see, hear or touch in the external world is no God. God is Truth, God is Holiness, God is Love. It argues the existence of some form of impurity or doubt in the soul when it fails to see God immediately. Truly there is no distance between the finite soul and the infinite God. God is immanent or immediately present with every created soul. The inspired devotees or sacred books may declare the Indwelling Deity; but they cannot reveal Him to us. God revealeth Himself directly to the eye of faith and faith relieth upon no evidence but the eyesight, and it will have no mediation. Faith is the straight way which leads us to God. If you have faith, you behold God this moment, and if you have no faith you can never expect to see Him. True faith which beholdeth God will brook no mediators. It sees the besetting God immediately. The faithful soul is roused, animated and electrified by the all-pervading divine presence. East, West, North and South, God filleth all space. The True God and the Beautiful God encircles the man of faith. He sees his indwelling and encompassing God both within and without, and in all directions.

Solitude (2)

The happy joy of solitude
 Grant unto me, O God,
 And keep me from the impacts rude
 Of th' life through which we plod.
 May in my ken Thy face abide,
 And on my tongue Thy name,
 Lest I forget Thee from my side,
 And cease Thee to proclaim!

As the child's eye greets its mother kind,
 Its heart doth leap with joy,
 Such fond delight may e'er I find
 In Thee : may it not cloy !
 Thy fame, that all the world doth hear,
 Makes me Thy refuge seek,
 Thy servant's welfare's e'er Thy care,
 Protect this bondsman weak.
 A heap of sins do I but live,
 Saith Tuka with regret :
 O Father, save me and forgive,
 O Mother kind, forget.

—*Saint Tukaram.*

No

Many years ago, a young man whose name has since rung through the land, was sitting at table, an invited guest, in what was considered "first society." It was almost his entrance into the charmed circle ; for he was pure, of obscure birth, a shoe-maker by trade, the son of a dissipated, degraded man ; and without education, except so far as his own earnest and persevering effort, had obtained it. But he was rich in integrity, courage, and reliance on God ; and with the strength that is only given through right principles of life, he had made his way amidst difficulties such as you who read this can hardly dream, and set out on a career of true, noble manhood.

At that time it was a universal custom to put wine on the dinner-table when guests were invited ; it was regarded as only common courtesy to offer it even to callers. Ministers drank it ; the most respectable people of all classes, who could afford the expense, were in the same habit.

The host himself asked the young man to take wine with him. It was counted a rudeness to refuse.

Was it an easy thing, think you, for him, then and there, to say No ?

But he had temperance principles. He had seen, yes, bitterly felt, in his childhood's home and his opening man-hood, the evil of intemperance ; and he knew that it was the one glass at the dinner

that began the downward tendency; that without the beginning, the terrible conclusion would never be reached; and believing in total abstinence as the only sure safeguard for others and himself, he would not sanction by his act, however trivial it might seem, the violation of that principle. Cost little or much, cost favour or feeling, he would be true.

“No” he said courteously, but firmly, “I never take wine.”

Bravely, resolutely, has he maintained his ground through after-years, up to this time. That victory made every subsequent one easier. On the side of temperance, humanity, right and God Himself, Henry Wilson firmly stands.

Necessity of Prayer

What is wanted is to bring into our every day life courage to act, obedience to the Divine will, and faith in the ultimate decency of things—that Truth and Love alone abide, that purity of Character, public and private, is imperishable and constitutes the glory of individuals and nations.

* *
*

For this pray and meditate: The *Rishis* did it—and hence their immortalised utterances, their sane views of life and piety, and their spirit of buoyancy and hope. We all need it in this restless age.

When Nanak weighed provisions, he used to repeat the words, “I am Thine, O Lord!” It is this spirit which we must carry into our day’s work, whatever it be. That work is best done, when we do it, not for bread and butter alone, not for honour and riches, but because it is God’s work. Even the smallest service ranks high with God. The Koran tells us that when God sent down the angel, Gabriel, to reform King Solomon—a high task even for an angel—God also commissioned Gabriel to help a little ant that was struggling at the time on earth to carry its little load—a grain of sugar. Here is a lesson for us all to do our work, whether high or low, as God’s Messengers and Servants. Work done in that spirit becomes dear and achieves the main end of all work, which is to educate us, uplift us and prevent us from sinking in life into mere brutes.

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Hence learn to meditate and pray. Go into solitude daily for a few minutes; study to be silent and pray :

“Among dull hearts a prophet never grew,
The nurse of full grown spirits is Solitude”.

—N. G. C.

The Three Enemies

There is a beautiful prayer in the Upanishads : “From things unreal lead me unto things real, from darkness lead me unto light and from death lead me unto life eternal.” It strikes us that these three prayers point to three great obstacles in the way of devotion and piety, namely worldliness, scepticism, and sin. But what is worldliness and wherein does its error lie? Worldliness, in a rough and general sense of the term, is the habitual liking for things that pertain to this world. But the evil has yet a deeper and darker significance. It implies a silent and tacit denial of the eternal principles of truth, love, justice and holiness. The true worldly man attaches but secondary importance to these immutable laws of the spirit. He is ready to abide by them only so far and so long, as they do not clash against his interest or pleasure. Where the choice lies between these and any other worldly object, he quietly dismisses them from his consideration and runs to the gratification of his other desires. The error of worldliness then lies in preference being given to things unreal over things that are real—to things that appear to be good over things that are eternally good. Hence the first portion of the prayer is a protest against this spirit of worldliness.

The second portion of the prayer evidently alludes to scepticism. By scepticism we do not mean here that total and wholesale denial of all verities—which is to be found only in certain schools of philosophy—but by it we mean an evil of a far subtler kind. There are a number of doubts which are stumbling blocks even in the way of believers. We have often come across persons, otherwise earnest and good, who believe in God, as life of the universe, but who cannot believe that there can be anything like a response to our prayers, or that the mercy of the Lord has anything to do with the salvation of our souls. To them prayer is only a spiritual exercise, it is the soul acting upon itself—and salvation is the fruit of our

own exertions. These subtle doubts often spread a sort of film over our spiritual vision and can, therefore, be very well compared to darkness. So intimate is the relation of truths, so great their interdependence upon one another that doubt or disbelief about one often leads to doubt or disbelief about many others — till the unfortunate inquirer is hopelessly entangled in the meshes of his doubt and gropes quite in the dark.

Sin is another great obstacle in the way of spiritual growth. Nothing is more killing to the moral nature than conscious violation of the law of purity. It is the greatest evil that can befall a religious spirit. The effect of worldliness and scepticism on the soul is temporary and not so dreadful. They simply mislead but do not benumb the life of the spirit to such an extent. It is for this reason that sin has been compared to death and the state of purity and peace to eternal life.

The remedy that can successfully meet all these evils is also suggested in the concluding portion of that celebrated prayer, which is as follows: Reveal thyself to me most awful God, and save me with the light of thy benign countenance. Superficially considered, this portion can be interpreted as a mere ebullition of a pious sentiment, as one of those numerous poetic expressions which abound in religious works; but it has a deep meaning underneath. Experience tells us that the only thing that can dispel all these doubts, that can clear away all those mists that hang before our spiritual vision, is the light that dawns upon us when we come into closer contact with the universal spirit. The light that communion and prayer throw into our eyes is invaluable in this respect. When this light shines through the upper windows of the spirit, on the chambers of our inner nature, we can discern, as never before, our true spiritual condition, we can discover the intimate relation that exists between the eternal principles of truth, love, justice and purity and the welfare of our spirit. Before this light, things that deluded us so long with a show of substance and reality, appear in their naked horridness and we discover the solemn reality of the things that before escaped our view. The first culture then that a theist should give himself is the cultivation of a prayerful spirit. In everything that concerns his soul let him proceed prayerfully. In his studies let him be guided by prayer; let his flagging attention and drooping energies be renovated

by prayers ; in the discharge of his duties let him be strengthened by prayer ; in the midst of doubts and difficulties let him be enlightened by prayer. Let him view men and things through the eye of prayer. The light of prayer is described in the Upanishads as the rays of the divine countenance and this light alone can enable us to distinguish between the real and the unreal in the world of the spirit.

Your Heaven is Within You

The soul's communion with God and with the spirits of departed saints shall be unto you your only true heaven; ye shall look forward to no other heaven. The dreamer's fairyland above the clouds, the sensualist's conception of a higher scene of earthly pleasure beyond the grave ye shall despise. In the spiritual exaltation of the soul seek ye the joy and sanctity of heaven. The whereabouts of departed spirits no man can tell ; nor can they be seen and spoken to as men of flesh and bones. In your own inmost souls, therefore, must ye seek their fellowship, in faith and love and unity of character. Even in your daily prayer and communion ye shall find glimpses of God's holy and heavenly mansions, and taste the joys of your Father's home. Your heaven is not far off but within. —*Keshub*.

Religion and Morality

Let not your religion and morality be separated, but always identified. For both are of God, and are only different aspects of truth and godliness. Seek not devotion at the expense of morality, nor shall ye strive to be dutiful and righteous without religion. Do not honour those forms of pietism and sanctimoniousness, asceticism and devotion wherein morality is sacrificed and violated. Nothing can be religious which is immoral, and be assured nothing can be truly moral which is not religious or godly. The New Dispensation is at once fulness of devotion and the perfection of moral purity. Beware of Divine justice which, however apparently profound your devotion, will surely visit the least transgression of moral law and duty with adequate punishment here and hereafter. My brethren, assiduously strive after perfection in all things, and let infinite progression be your watchword. Neglect no virtue. Rest not satisfied with mediocrity. Do not halt after a few days' march. But go on in the path of eternal progress, perfecting every faculty and

sentiment with which Heaven has endowed you. In poverty and resignation, in prayer and communion, in benevolence and justice, in veracity and honesty, in meekness and forgiveness, in intellectual culture and physical health, in all domestic and social virtues try to reach the highest ideal of perfection. So shall ye realise the harmony of character in its highest development. —*Keshub*.

The Spirit of True Piety

It is a common enough remark that it matters little how many books we read but how we read them. In other words it is the culture that we receive, which is more valuable.

Like the acquisition of the truth, like good works, sin also has a prospective and reflexive action upon the soul; and its enormity should be measured by that. That evil and injurious effects of an act of sin do not end in that day or that hour. It almost uniformly brings two most pernicious and fatal consequences in its train. In the first place, it tends to weaken the horror and hatred against sin, secondly it enervates the will. If sin had not this ominous significance, it would have become less an object of dread to a sincerely God-seeking soul. The single blow, however great, man can somehow outlive, but the chain that it puts around the neck of the soul, is what he mostly dreads.

Let us now try to apply the above-mentioned principle of prospective and reflexive action to another very important matter. Why is it that we pray? Why is it that we daily mutter out a number of words in the name of God? Do the ears of the Almighty wait to be tickled with flattery? Are penitent lamentations and humble supplications necessary for allaying the fury of an avenging Deity? Is this the light in which we take our prayers and thanksgivings? Certainly not. The necessity of prayer does not arise from God's side. It is we that want it for our own souls. It is the spontaneous yearning of our nature, designed by a Wisdom that takes in eternity, for our spiritual good. Prayer like the acquisition of the truth leads to true spiritual culture. In other words it creates a prayerful spirit, a loving and resigning attitude of the soul towards God.

Let us carry the simile a little further. As a literary glutton may also be little better than a fool or dunce, similarly a man who is most prolific about his formal prayers may yet be lacking this very spirit of piety. While his lips are full of fervent and lengthy prayers, he is as far from the real kingdom of heaven as any other worldly man. The spirit of true piety is the aim towards which we should direct our endeavours.

Love—The Highest Bliss

Love is the highest bliss that man can attain to, for through it he knows himself a part of the One, and it is this which is for ever establishing relations between human beings through the medium of art, literature, religion, social activities and national institutions. To love in the highest sense is to die to the personal self and live in the larger self, and those who give themselves for the sake of mankind are living the life of the soul, and proving to us the ultimate truth of humanity. We call them the men of the Great Soul. It is said in the Upanishad:— “It is not that thou lovest thy son because thou desirest him, but thou lovest thy son because thou desirest thine own soul.” Whomsoever we love, in him we find our soul in the truest sense, and our happiness comes from the extension of our consciousness and capacity for self-realisation. It is a common-place fact that the joys and sorrows of our loved ones are our own joys and sorrows. Through sharing them we have grown larger, we have apprehended that great truth which transcends the universe. In some respects our love for our children, for our family, may limit other relationships and prevent the extension of consciousness in certain directions. It may even become a narrow, exclusive thing, and fail ultimately to fulfil its purpose like a light placed in a sealed enclosure; but it is the *first step*, and all the wonder lies in that first step. From it we learn that our highest joy is in losing our egoistic self by sacrificing it for the welfare of others.

—Ravindra Nath Tagore.

The Faith of the Brahmo Samaj

The Brahmo Samaj believes that God is, that he is a Spirit, and that he is One without a second.

That God is a personal and living God, with the infinite attributes of truth, wisdom, love, holiness, power, glory, and peace.

That God is present in us, and with us. He directs all the functions of our body and mind according to fixed laws. He watches over all our thoughts and actions. His spirit surrounds us, and fills us, and is the cause and centre of all physical and mental forces.

That God is present in all the aspects and laws of nature and nothing that takes place, takes place without His will and power.

That as God's general providence superintends over the affairs of all mankind and the world at large, so His special providence presides over the circumstances and destinies of individual men, and leads them through mysterious ways from evil to good. —P. C. M.

The Two Tests

One of the wisest teachings of the Bhagvadgita is, that man should act in complete resignation to the Divine Will, success or applause he should not seek, nor should he make happiness or future reward, the aim of his exertions. Exercises of piety, that have such aims in view are considered low and quite unworthy of a truly God-loving soul. It is something like dealing in merchandise. God is to be loved and adored for God's sake and not for the sake of heaven or any future reward. Systems of religion that hold forth before their devotees, the prospect of heaven, or of a crown of glory are selfish, material and worldly in their spirit, according to the Bhakti school. Our father, says a true disciple of Bhakti, is not a merchant, he does not seek to purchase the love and allegiance of His children with heaven or His grace as its price. He must be loved because He is lovable. It is one of the wisest teachings of devotional philosophy. It can also form a good test to measure the depth and genuineness of our piety. Let every God-loving worshipper put this question to his soul;—"When I approach my God in prayer, when I open my soul to the holy influence of His love, what is it that sustains me in such exercises? When I decide upon particular modes of spiritual culture, what is it that determines my conduct? Do I seek God, because he is a source of joy to my soul or because His worship is a means to an end?" If descending down into the secret workings of our spirit, we find, we are in reality actuated by hopes of *gain*, which

may be spiritual improvement in this world or reward in the next, we should at once conclude that we are yet very far from true piety.

The other test is equally important and equally spiritual. It is this. A truly pious man always seeks the glory of God in whatever he does or says. "Let the praise and glory be Thine," is his constant prayer. This prayer may be unuttered, but this is an ever-present thought whenever he pursues anything good or great or noble. If success crowns his efforts, he is thankful that the Lord has blessed his exertions and considers the praise as not his own. We are so much vain and so much conceited, the propensity to seek after glory is so strong in us, that the sentiment contained in the above lines would sound like one of those cants with which the religious world abounds. People may naturally think that it is one of those fine things that are often said, with the full conviction that they are practically impossible. But however impossible or impracticable it may look to many of us, it is a fact, and history also bears testimony to this fact, that there have always been choice spirits in the world, who lived and died, and wrought many wonders, more than many of their fellow mortals, with this genuine spirit of self-abasement. The proud man of God, frowns at a sceptical world and cries, "I—there is nothing as "I" it is all God", but the humble and lowly man of God says, "I—what am I, mere dust and ashes, anything that is good or great in me is God's."

Brahmaism and the Masses

Many thoughtful men are of opinion that Brahmaism is only for the educated classes, that it is too high and abstract for the masses, and that the latter require something more tangible to hold by. They also say and say truly that unless a religion takes a root in the lower strata of society, it cannot last long. The success of Christianity, Buddhism and Mahomedanism and the tenacity of Hindu idolatry, they attribute to their having taken a hold of the common people. They go even further and seriously assert that some tinge of superstition and idolatry is necessary to satisfy the hearts of ignorant and uneducated men, and as Brahmaism is a protest against all sorts of idolatry and superstition, it shall never be accepted by

the common people. From these premises they come to the conclusion that Brahmaism can never be the religion of a whole community or country and that therefore it shall not last long.

Admitting the premises, we cannot deny the truth of the conclusion. While accepting the first premise as true, we reject the second as false,... are we to say that while in all other departments, truth is to supercede error, in the province of religion only, error shall triumph over truth? Truth alone shall abide. And in spite of all the fears and discouragements, Brahmaism shall prosper, if it is based on the firm rock of truth. Do you admit that the doctrines of Buddhism are true and free from error, idolatry and superstition? That is sufficient; we need nothing more. For the fact of its having truth for its basis is the surest guarantee for its enduring to the last. As for its doctrines and ideas being too high and abstract for the intellect of the masses, that is no objection. Look at the Jews. Judaism though a kind of monotheism, has its hold over the masses. The God of the Mahomedans is also an abstract Deity, and yet the most ignorant votary of Islam prays to that Deity five times during the day. The doctrinal discussions of Rabbis and Rishis and philosophers do not affect the simple faith of the masses. Besides, the objection has no truth in it. For, what can be simpler than that God is the Universal Father and that all men are brethren and that therefore we should love and worship Him and Him alone as our Father and Saviour, and love and serve all men as His children. The first doctrine includes all our duty to God, and the second, the whole code of morality. Does it require a well-cultivated intellect to grasp that we shall live after death and by the grace of God go on increasing in faith and love and righteousness till eternity, that there is no other heaven than the presence of God and a conscience free from sin, and no other hell than the heart estranged from God and a guilty conscience? And yet what more is needed for the salvation of man?

Cling to God

Take up, my tongue, with all thy might
 Thy great Lord's name: 'tis sweet.
 Be yours, my eyes, the high delight
 His wonders vast to greet.

Receive, my ears His praises blest,
 With portals opened wide.
 Flee, flee my mind, to Him with haste,
 And at His feet reside.
 My life, saith Tuka, to Him cleave,
 And ne'er His living presence leave.

—*Saint Tukaram.*

The True Theist

Who is a true theist? What are the characteristics that mark him out as the true worshipper of God? It is an old question indeed, but yet it needs be asked now and then, to turn our eyes to the amount of spiritual progress we are really making; for our progress greatly depends on the ideal we have before us. What is our ideal in this respect then? We shall try to answer the question by looking at it in two aspects; first, the worshipper's relation to God; second, his relation to man. What then is the spiritual state of a true theist, in relation to God? In the first place, a true theist must be one who has a positive faith in God as the redeemer. It should not be that negative kind of faith which is more an intellectual dissent from prevalent superstitions, than that earnest, steadfast and deep conviction, which wraps up the whole soul and makes its influence felt over every department of our nature. Idolatry, whether in the shape of the worship of images, or the worship of the idols of the world, becomes impossible in such a state, not from a negative turning away from falsehood, but literally from there being no room in the heart, previously filled by a burning faith. As the advance of the mercurial column in a thermometer, in a state of preparation, results in the expulsion of the air within it, similarly idolatry and worldliness, are expelled by a most natural process from a soul, where this living faith advances and engrosses the whole soul. Secondly, a true theist must be one who feels that he has actually obtained the food, for which his spirit craved, the fountain after which his heart panted. His looks must not be like those of a hungry man, but of one who has been plentifully fed. Such a life has all the charms of a spiritual success, and such a life alone can successfully propagate the truth of theism, in as much as few people

who seek life will turn to a dead carcass. A merely destructive and spiritually barren character has no charms for those who are impelled by spiritual hunger and thirst.

Thirdly, a true theist is one in whom the regenerating power of God meets with little opposition. There is a power behind us, which would lead us unto our salvation, if our natures had but offered no resistance to its work in the soul. The conquest of God in our natures is not complete, because we have not love and faith enough to surrender ourselves entirely to the Divine Will. Pleasures, interests, passions and prejudices, are the obstacles in the way of this free action of this regenerating power. But a true theist is possessed and vanquished by this conquering divine energy. God has taken possession of him, has found in him a non-obstructive child, who resigns himself to His guidance.

In his relation to the world, a true theist is one who considers doing the will of God as his highest pleasure. In other words, he regards the world as a field for loving and serving the interests of truth, love, justice and holiness. These, he considers his highest good, in them he lives and moves, and takes delight in their contemplation. This spiritual attachment places him above the meannesses of the world. Like ice, he is of the world, but yet above it and not under it. Hence such a life is singularly free from the corruptions of the world. As his faith in these principles is strong, his love too is invincible. There is a steady current of good will, irresistibly flowing towards his fellow-men, which, like a current of water, knows not to retrace its course. In other words such a one really loves his enemies and blesses them that curse him. Irresistible and invincible love is the characteristic of a truly godly soul.

Such is the ideal we have before us, and it is good to measure our individual lives now and then by this high standard. If the name of God be not like fire unto our soul, if it does not operate as a regenerating force, as a power that tends to establish the Kingdom of Heaven in our hearts, it is worth very little. What good is there in prattling about God and His attributes, in vindicating His cause from the ravages of scepticism and unbelief, if He is not a real saving power to the believer? To vindicate the cause of theism, because such a belief is necessary for maintaining the order in

society, is to offer a direct insult to God. The true worshipper cries,—“In God my soul is deeply concerned; He is the home of my soul, my refuge in the moments of trouble, my inebriating joy in hours of solitary communion; my beloved master in the midst of the daily duties of life; my nearest friend and supporter in times of failing strength”. If God is not this to your souls, belief in His existence is of very little consequence for our moral and spiritual purposes.

Practice Righteousness

Before thou art carried away dead to the Destroyer, by the royal command of Yama,* by his dreadful messengers, strive after rectitude. Before the impassive lord Yama, whom none can oppose, snatches away thy life with its roots and kinships; before the wind which precedes him blows, before thou art carried away, practice preparation for death. Before Death, conveyed by his charioteer, Disease, violently dissolves thy body, and ends thy life, practice great austerity. Before the fearful wolves which dwell in men's bodies rush on thee from every side, strive after holiness. Before all alone, thou beholdest the darkness, make haste; before thou seest the golden trees on the mountain, submit. Before evil associates and foes that look like friends, pervert thy views, seek what is highest. Amass that wealth which has nothing to fear from kings or thieves, and which does not desert thee in death. Neither mother, nor children, nor kinsmen, nor dear familiar friends follow a man in his straits; he departs alone. The deeds alone, good or bad, which he has formerly done, are his fellow-travellers when he goes to the next world. The collections of gold and gems which he has made, by good or evil means, do not help him when his body is dissolved. When thou goest thither, there is no witness of the deeds which thou hast or hast not done, equal to thine own self. Amass righteousness, for, thy life is passing away.

—*Mahabharat*

*Death.

The Living God and True Piety

Is God living? Is he living in that sense in which we are all living? In a general sense every believer knows that God lives, but

does the believer feel him to be a really living person? When thinkest Thou, O man, of thy Creator in solitude, dost thou feel thy soul to be touched as it were, by a living fire? For unless thou feelest him to be such, thy faith cannot save thee. We put this question for the spiritual scrutiny of every true and sincere worshipper of God.

It is not the living God that people always worship. There are phantoms walking abroad in the world, whom men sometimes call God and render homage as believers. In the first place, there is the God of the fable, — as described in mythologies. According to these writings, he becomes incarnate now and then, to punish the wicked and to uphold the good, or to take away the sin and suffering of the world. This idea is not peculiar to any nation or creed. Man in himself is not equal to the exigencies of his mortal existence; he is not strong enough to stand the manifold evils of his life, so God must humiliate himself, must put on the weakness of humanity, must live in flesh and blood, must participate in man's limitations, trials and sufferings. This is the idea underlying all this fabulous mythology. Without entering, for the present into a discussion of such a mythical conception, it may safely be asserted that the tendency of such a belief is to draw the mind away from the living God. It has further, in many instances, a demoralizing effect. All the stories and anecdotes gathering round the memory of such a being, have always a vast influence on the mind of the worshipper either for good or for evil.

Like the God of the fable, there is a God of history, all of whose dealings with humanity are things of the past. Time there was when he did establish something like immediate intercourse with his children, when he did reveal high and precious truths, when he did give laws unto them, and took an active interest in all their affairs; but those times are changed, either God has retreated or man has fallen away from him. Man, fallen man, has no longer right to approach and meet him, to wait upon him with his supplication, to receive direct from him life and light. For saving truths, for light unto salvation, he must turn to the sacred record of God's dealings with the world. All that is passed; all those dealings are finally closed. God's mandates and instructions were given once for all, and the stamp and seal of Heaven have been given to them for time

and for eternity. This is the idea underlying the belief in an infallible scripture, which every true worshipper of a living God discards in proportion he grows in true piety. To call the recorded experience of one age, as the sum total of all possible experiences of the human spirit, is to call Cowper's lines on his mother's picture, as the sum total of all possible human experiences on filial piety. The human mind is every day brought in relationship to God and every worshipper has his fresh experiences, his new aspirations and his original lights. It is absurd to ask him to hang on a book like famished children sucking on the corpse of their mothers. Truly, one who knows God, the real living God, does not search for Him in the past. As the past age is always the golden age with the unthinking majority, so God's past relationship with humanity is the only relationship with this class of men. There is another thing, which might be taken as the cause of such a mistake. They judge God's dealings in the light of the miracles, recorded in the books. They find their own times singularly wanting in those miraculous proofs; consequently they consider these times fallen away from God. It is the fallacy of setting up a false standard and then measuring truth by it.

So much for the God of history. There is also the God of philosophy. He is a nothing-like something or something-like nothing; and the believer is a know-nothing and a say-nothing. Philosophy teaches us that we cannot rationally hide from ourselves the belief that there is some force, some energy or power underneath this grand frame-work of things; call it life, call it the evolving energy, call it the creative and conservation principle, call it by whatsoever name, we cannot avoid the belief in its existence. But to predicate will or personality, of this something is unphilosophical and unscientific! It can best be defined as "An unknown tendency in nature making for righteousness."

It is *in*-finite, *un*-created, *un*-timed, *un*-intelligible, *un*-searchable, *in*-comprehensible, *in*-definable, *un*-limited, *un*-fathomed, *un*-speakable and *un*-knowable. To bow down before this something-nothing is folly and infatuation. Thus reasons philosophy—the weak-kneed and sickly girl, always brooding over her incapacity, and much wasted by the thought of her misfortune. But not so is faith, her

hale and hearty sister, who plays in the constant sun-shine of paternal smiles. The God of philosophy is a pantheistic conception, without life or without attraction. The moral energies of the soul are benumbed, and its aspirations chilled, in the presence of this lifeless and miserable existence.

What the heart longs for is an object, whom we can love and embrace with the intensest fervour of our souls. If salvation is worth desiring, or regeneration worth seeking, it can only be achieved by a conscious and living contact with the living God. To call God a person is to ascribe intelligence, love and will to him. Yes, we do so unhesitatingly, and we do not think we are unscientific or unreasonable in this assumption. God is not altogether unknowable as philosophers would lead us to believe. God is a person, an ever-present and ever-active reality, immediately approachable to the soul of man. Let the true seeker after salvation fully realize the significance of this expression. God is not a creation of man's fancy. If in worshipping Him, the soul does not feel itself touched by living fire, if its moral energies are not roused, if it does not come under the dominion of a new and elevating power it is not the living God who inspires him. Let the earnest theist begin his prayers with the solemn words, – "Thou livest". Let him repeat these words to his soul, till they become living and till fire begins to flash from amongst them. When the worshipper has realized the living God, let him continue in this attitude, till the divine power establishes its conquest over his heart. There can be no true piety without this conscious contact with the living God.

A Decalogue

(1) Thou shalt not be late at the gate of the temple, for, though it be still open, your tardy arrival may close the gateway to communion with God in many a heart.

(2) Thou shalt not profane the holy place of prayer by going empty-hearted into it, for better than the silver dropped as gift from the hand is the golden yearning for holiness brought in the soul.

(3) Thou shalt not carry across its threshold the cares of the world, neither its selfish ambitions, nor, its trivial vanities, but enter as disciples of God, in search of the grace and mercy that cleanse from all unrighteousness.

(4) Thou shalt not disturb the seekers after God by unseemly apparel which obscures the vision or by undevout manners which destroy the peace of worshippers.

(5) Thou shalt worship God, not in a sad but in a joyous spirit, emphasizing not the storms and shadows, but making manifest the peace and glory of the dayspring from on High.

(6) Thou shalt bring into the sanctuary a heart full of penitence and pity, and an open mind both reverent and teachable, in order that the church may provide the invigorating atmosphere of religious nurture.

(7) Thou shalt always remember that thou art the child of God, and so endeavour to make every look and gesture, both speech and silence, such a manifestation of His spirit as shall help to establish His Kingdom of Love among men.

(8) Thou shalt heartily join in the whole service, making it by song and reading and prayerful attitudes, productive of reverence and righteousness.

(9) Thou, the minister, shalt not turn the pulpit into an advertising agency, nor litter the pews with distracting bulletins, nor tolerate inappropriate music, nor permit disorderly choir, nor divert attention, by unbecoming levity or sensational mannerism, from the everlasting gospel of the higher life.

(10) Thou shalt also bring to the congregation the wisdom of life, gathered from wide fields of study and experience, so praying that all may feel the presence of God and so preaching that every one shall depart with wiser mind, warmer heart, clearer conscience and stronger will.

—*The Christian Register.*

The Upward Path

In the presence of God (the eternally beautiful, good and true) the feeling of dependence is drawn forth into holy and tender resignation. To give up ourselves to the love of the beautiful, the good and the true—to feel ourselves shielded, protected, inspired and encompassed by these eternal laws—is the first development of religion in its purer and nobler form.

The moral emotions form some of the highest enjoyments of human life. They shed a calmness, a satisfaction, and a glow over the soul that is conscious of its own rectitude. They give at once a zest to our prosperity, a dignity to the period of human adversity.

So sure as man was created for an ultimate end, so sure as he was intended to arrive at ever higher attainments in every thing great and good, must his path-way be perpetually upwards, and the whole sensibilities of his nature come more and more into harmony with the Divine nature—the life of God.

The essential germ of a religious life is concentrated in the feeling of absolute dependence—a high and holy sense of our being inseparably related to God—of our being parts of His great plan—of our being held up in His vast embrace—of our being formed for some specific destiny which must ever be kept in view as the end of our being.

The Absolute Ruler

Ishvara¹ is said to be eternal and all-pervading, because in all time and in all space occur phenomena of which He is the author. He is all-knowing and almighty, because no phenomenon occurs without the power of Him to whom nothing remains unknown. He is stainless, because He is not affected by the phenomena He produces, just as time is instrumental in bringing about change of leaf and flower without being itself changed. He is the All-Inspirer because He is the indweller of all hearts and has established all those ordinances which have found outward expression in Shruti² and Smriti³. While a potter fashions articles external to himself, Ishvara fashions bodies out of the universe which is not external to Himself, and hence He is called the Soul of All. There being no other agent to contest his supremacy, He is called the Absolute Ruler. He is free from likes and dislikes and makes living creatures suffer joys and sorrows according to their Karma.⁴ He is the Lord of All, because no one is able to change in the universe of His creation the order established by Him.

—*Translated from a Shaiva work.*

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| 1. God | 2. A law book of revelation | 3. A law book of | |
| recollection | 4. Action. | | |
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Religion is Prayer

Everlasting is the necessity of religion. Look back to the history of humanity. Its earliest records speak of religion. The historian discovers the early man engaged in worship and devotion, natural and simple, though occasionally rough and rude. This innate impulse, the inner necessity, has persisted ever since through all the vicissitudes of time. Numerous creeds and cults have arisen and disappeared. Atheistic systems of philosophy have protested against it as rank superstition and mockery. A large number of evil practices have always crept in the recognised religious beliefs and practices. Wars and bloodshed have taken place in the name of religion. But with all the abuses the inner sap has sent forth new shoots and branches and covered the ancient stem with dense foliage to the comfort and delight of those who have sought to rest in its shade. What is true of the race is true of the individual. He is religious because he cannot help being so. It is a necessity of his mental and spiritual nature, which do what he would, he can never escape.

But whence does the necessity arise? What is it that compels man to seek God? If we look at his physical side, there is little to distinguish him from other animals. His body is composed of the same materials as those of other creatures and its organic functions are regulated by the same laws. But it is in man that a phenomenon, new and unique in all creation, makes its appearance. The spiritual world which rises up in him has not its counterpart in all, his environment, nay, it is something incommensurable with the body with which it is associated. It has its own laws which, supplying high and noble ideals, invite conformity and obedience. Truth, beauty and goodness appeal to the spiritual in man and call upon him to make all his life, truthful, beautiful and good. But though the spirit is willing the flesh is weak. The physical world is always in conflict with the spiritual and rends the inner life of man to pieces. There is always a contradiction, an opposition which he finds so difficult to surmount.

The same contradiction, the same conflict appears in all activities and phases of the human life. The initial discord is present at all times and places. The exercise of the intellect brings some knowledge to man. He is glad and tries to know more. The

inner ideal continually presses him onward and would allow him no rest. But he soon discovers there are limitations to his knowledge. The very conditions under which he works, presuppose the small extent of his achievement. He cannot but feel it. The spiritual in him is full of suggestions that transcend all limitations and thus leads to a sense of dissatisfaction. What is true of the human intellect is true of the feelings. Man runs after pleasures and happiness. But he soon finds that there is a limit to them all. Supposing favourable circumstances place within his reach all enjoyment, the very satiation produces disgust. Pleasure presupposes pain and enjoyment a want. Only a hungry man can relish food and a thirsty man's pleasure in drinking water can never be approached by the choicest drinks of the voluptuous. But the idea of eternal happiness or bliss is present in the human mind and causes despair over his earthly life. This contradiction, this discord is more pronounced in the domain of will. Man finds himself doing what he does not approve, and approving what he does not do. The moral world discloses laws to which his physical life would not bend. The inner voice calls for justice and love, but the animal in man goes in for self-interest and aggrandisement. There comes the sense of weakness and sin; and man throws himself on the mercy of the Supreme Spirit. In this dissatisfaction, despair and weakness lies the source of all religion. The very feeling of our limitations and weakness brings in the feeling of the presence of God in whom, all contradictions disappear. The approach to Him gives peace and harmony, and man finds himself reconciled with his lot. That has been so from the earliest times to the present day and will always be so, as long as the present constitution of human beings endures. We find this feeling of dependence bursting out in prayer in the hymns of the Vedas, in the psalms of the Old Testament, in the prayer of Jesus Christ and in the *abhangas* of Tukaram, and in fact in the utterances of all religious men.

Religion will therefore last for ever, as long as man is man; for it lies in the communion of man with his Divine Father on Whom he feels himself and his destiny to depend; "This commerce with God", says Auguste Sabatier, "is realised by prayer. Prayer is religion in act—that is to say, real religion.....If religion is a practical need, the response to it can only be a practical action. No theory would

suffice. Religion is nothing if it is not the vital act by which the whole spirit seeks to save itself by attaching itself to its principle. This act is prayer, by which I mean, not an empty utterance of words, not the repetition of certain sacred formulas, but the movement of the soul putting itself into personal relation and contact with the mysterious power whose presence it feels even before it is able to give it a name. Where this inward prayer is wanting there is no religion ; on the other hand, wherever this prayer springs up in the soul and moves it, even in the absence of all form and doctrine clearly defined, there is true religion, living piety."

Reconciliation

The great want of the age is reconciliation. The apostles of materialism under the shadows of scientific theories want to sap the foundations of the human soul and the existence of God, and the apostles of idealism set science and experiment at defiance. There is on the one hand, the viscious moralities of necessitarianism which even can condone murder and other crimes ; and there are, on the other hand, the theories of absolute morality which combat utilitarianism in every form. One religion fights with another religion, and the churches are in a state of endless warfare. There is a universal conflict in the world. In every department of thought, of action, of faith, of organisation, men bitterly disagree. What is to be the reconciliation of such disagreements ? Perhaps in other spheres of activity, enmity was to be expected and could be pardoned. But in God's household, in the name of Infinite Love, in the cause of Him who is blessedness and peace, such bitter conflicts are strange and without excuse. We want a vantage ground, a higher platform of thought, faith and feeling, standing upon which we might view all theories, all philosophies and all prophets in the samelight. Standing upon which, we could adopt everything that is good, true and beautiful, in every department of human thought and action. Truth was an indivisible and integral thing. In Science, Psychology, in Ethics, in Religion, truth is one and the same indivisible object. Every truth is religious and every true doctrine of religion is scientific and philosophical.

There is but one expanse of blue unfathomable water which girds the whole globe. There is only one ocean around the earth.

But this same ocean is called by various names, in various latitudes and localities: the Indian Ocean, the Pacific and the Atlantic, form but one sheet of water, doing beneficent work for all mankind. So there is but one ocean of truth girding the globe of truth—seeking humanity. It is called philosophy under one circumstances, science under another, ethics under the third, and it is called religion elsewhere. But it is the same identical and indivisible reality. He who recognizes it in one part ought to recognize it in all.

Various nations of men have various moral and intellectual peculiarities. The Divine Being who is infinite perfection cannot be comprehended by any individual or even by any race; Human nature is like a magnificent prism with many sides and many places. The eternal light of God's nature pours through each side of the prism according to its constitution and form. And various streams of light which thus pour in, through the different tendencies, aptitudes and peculiarities of human nature, under different circumstances, combined together, form the great light of the world's revelation. But no man is able, nor is any church able to bring about by its own genius this vast synthesis of truth. We need a dispensation from the Great God Himself to combine for man's benefit, the manifold revelations which He has vouchsafed in different ages and climes; and such a revelation has already come. In the Brahma Samaj, you do find the vantage ground from which you can survey the conflicting faiths and systems of the world with an eye of the impartial brotherhood. In the Brahma Samaj, God has been graciously pleased to combine the light of science, philosophy and ethics with the light of His revealed truth and genuine inspiration. In the Brahma Samaj, all religions indicate the same holiness, love and wisdom, in various degrees and measures. In the Brahma Samaj there is all prophesy: all scriptures are equally honoured. Humanity is sick; the world craves for union, reconciliation and peace.

Wisdom Tabloids (1)

Every duty which is bidden to wait returns with seven fresh duties at its back.

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Whoever strives for wisdom, but forgets to apply this wisdom,
is like a man who ploughs, but forgets the sowing.

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Not only should we pluck roses, but should also strew them
in the paths of others.

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Not only say the right thing in the right place, but leave unsaid
the wrong thing at the tempting moment.

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No two things differ more than hurry and despatch. Hurry is
the mark of a weak mind, despatch of a strong one.

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The whole universe in which we live is arranged in such a
fashion that, if we would be at all in harmony with it, we must have
patience.

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Always he who most forgiveth his brother is most just.

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Not always say all that thou knowest; but always know all
that thou sayest.

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He who wants to climb must begin at the bottom.

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Life is not so short but there is always time enough for
courtesy.

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To know one's ignorance is the best part of knowledge.

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There would be more happiness in the world if we would rejoice
more with others instead of feigning sympathy with their sorrows.

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Revelation

(Natural and Supernatural)

The term "Revelation" has so long and so exclusively been used
in connection with an erroneous theory of Divine intercourse with
man that, those who have abandoned it, and embraced a more
rational theory, are often tempted, in order to guard themselves from

being misunderstood, to cry down the phrase altogether. It has been the error of traditional theology to confine religion wholly within the regions of the supernatural, and to represent, as local and peculiar what was but the manifestation of an universal fact. Theists, who have discarded the ancient beliefs, have broken away from supernaturalism as well. But is it true that theists do not believe in revelation in any sense? Do not they believe in any way in which God reveals to man those truths which are necessary for his salvation and union with Himself? Is man, according to them, left to grope hopelessly in the dark with respect to God and His relation to man? Far from it. As Miss Cobbe beautifully says "to relinquish the popular creed and become a Theist is not to relinquish one single ray of divine light. It is, on the contrary, to see rolled away from our sky every cloud which hid from us the sun of Righteousness, henceforth and forever to shine down with unshaded glory upon our hearts". Let us then see what is the old popular view of revelation, and what our own.

All traditional forms of religion are at one in declaring that a particular book or number of books contains the record of a revelation that God gave to some chosen inspired prophet or prophets; and that, whatever is recorded in them is all truth and nothing but truth. The traditional theory also holds that the gift of inspiration does not extend further than those chosen prophets, or extends only to a small number of their legitimate successors in the office of prophetship.

Now what do we say? Do we say that these records which are so highly revered by so many of our race, do not contain any Divine truth? Do we say that Moses or Jesus, Mahomet or the Rishis did not utter God's truth? Who with the Bible, the Koran, and the Shastras open before him, can say this! These sacred records contain much that has been vouchsafed by God for the salvation of His children. But then, is everything contained in these books true? We say no, and why? We shall try to make our position more clear in this respect.

How do we know that these records contain revealed truths? How have we come to this conclusion? Who is our judge in this case? It is a fact not to be gainsaid that whether traditionalists or theists, we must make our final appeal in this case to the spiritual

and moral faculties of man. We cannot declare a book to be inspired, before we have known it to be so, and how can we come to this knowledge except through the spiritual and moral faculties with which God has endowed us? The traditionalist and the theist are, no doubt, at great variance as to the extent to which our natural faculties should be appealed to; but both of them, if they are not inconsistent, must make their final appeal to them nevertheless. Now we theists say that the same witnesses that tell us that many things in the Bible and the Shastras are true also tell us that many other things contained in these are erroneous. The same faculty that tells us that the doctrine "God is just" is true, also tells us the doctrine that "God will doom sinners to everlasting punishment" is false. The same faculty that testifies to the truth of the assertion "God is one" also tell us that there cannot be a plurality of persons in the God-head. We therefore come to the conclusion that Moses and Jesus, Mahomet and the Rishis were inspired, but inspiration did not make them infallible.

We have now made our position clear with respect to one side of the question. We believe in the possibility of inspiration as a spiritual law, but we do not believe that inspiration makes man infallible. We believe that the sacred scriptures of man-kind are full of truths spiritually revealed to the great teachers of the human race, but we do not believe that whatever they contain is true. There is another side of the question to which we must now turn. Perception implies organs or faculties in the perceiver through which he perceives. We could not see if we had no eyes, we could not hear if we had no ears. If Moses and others had revelations from God, if they saw God and heard His voice, they must have had faculties through which they did all these things. Now, were these faculties peculiar gifts granted to them, or did they share them with their fellow-creatures? Those who make inspiration a peculiar gift confined to a few chosen prophets of God, must say, whether they say it in so many words or not, that this peculiar gift was imparted to them through a peculiar organ which ordinary men do not possess. If not, where lies the peculiarity of their peculiar gift? We need hardly say that we do not believe in this miracle, and here again our theory of inspiration differs materially from the popular one. The popular theory is essentially based on

supernaturalism, and in-as-much as we do not believe in the changeableness of God's physical and moral laws, we do not believe in it. We believe that inspiration is not a rare gift granted to a favoured individual here in India or there in Judea, but that it is co-extensive with the whole human race. That God reveals Himself and His truths under certain conditions to Moses and Jesus, as well as to His humblest children. He is present with us now, as He was with the prophets, thousands of years ago. The degree of inspiration, no doubt, differs in various individuals according to a variety of moral and spiritual conditions; but nevertheless there is not a single child of God in whose heart there does not shine a spark of His heavenly light. We can see God through our spiritual faculties, as truly as we can see the material world with our eyes, and hear the voice of our fellow-men with our ears. To us they are perfectly natural things, and being natural they are also universal.

Faith (1)

Beyond the sphere of speech and mind
 Thy being mounteth high :
 Its vast extent and depth to find
 Faith's measure I apply.
 Thee, Infinite, past reach of thought,
 With trust devout I span :
 No meaner scale by cunning wrought
 Thy Self can truly scan.
 No yoga's¹ conquest, yaga's² gift,
 No tapa's³ long travail,
 Nor body's pains, nor mind's strains lift
 The soul to Thee : they fail.
 A simple faith, saith Tuka, is
 What marks our service still :
 Such as it is, Lord, may it please
 Thy kind, accepting will.

—Saint Tukaram.

1 Unity with God. 2 Sacrifice. 3 Austerity.



Mahadeo Govind Ranade

Mahadeo Govind Ranade

Any man, who came in contact with Ranade even for a few minutes, departed from his presence with the consciousness that he had seen a great and good man. No, not only this; 'great and good,' these words have an idea of distance in them. A man who saw Ranade, no doubt, felt reverence for him, but there was such a simplicity about him, such an unbounding faith in human nature, such an insight into all that was good in the person he saw, such a loving kindness, such an ardent desire to help him in realising himself that the man when he departed, thought better of himself, was reconciled to himself, a new hope was roused in him and he had ever afterwards the vision of a calm, peaceful soul with an unbounded love for all.

In howsoever perturbed a mood we might have gone to the Mandir, in a few seconds we felt the soothing effect of his words. His words were like a shower of rain on a parched and dried up field. Our attention was immediately taken off from our petty cares and sorrows. With him we learnt to appreciate the holiness, the purity, love and greatness of Namdev, Tukaram, and the other saints and prophets. With him we began to realise how the hills and rivers, the valleys and fields, all reveal to us the beauty and the love of God. With him we saw that man, however low he might be, had a divinity in him; that man it was who showed the meaning of nature; that though nature revealed God, man, family life and human society revealed Him and His love to us in a still higher way. He opened our eyes, made us see that in our communion with nature, or man we are really in communion with God who is manifest in both; that all the joy, which nature gives us and all the kindness and love we experience in life, is God's pouring of His love upon us.

He would also make us look inwards into our own hearts. Were we sincere or did we show off ourselves to others as we really were not? Were we really humble or did we indulge in vanity for some trifling thing or other? Were we pure in our hearts or did we try to give a good colour to what we did? Did we minimise our own faults and look at others merely to find faults in them? Were we charitable and did we accustom ourselves to see the good in others? For the good, he would say, was the

reality and the evil was the defect of our own sight. Were we awake to our own sinning nature ; at times we might feel contrition, but did we really long for deliverance from sin ? Did we realise our weakness, and God's love and care for us ? Did we realise what we meant when we said we were God's children ? That was, he would say, our high privilege which at the same time entailed a high responsibility. It meant that we were dependent upon His support, that we had to bring our will in conformity to God's, that in implicit faith we had to follow the inspiration with regard to our duty that He gave us ; that He knew what was for our good and we had to do our duty and to bear our lot in a cheerful and contented spirit, relying upon His providence ; that God was with us and why should we be afraid ?

By his precept and example he would enforce the necessity of prayer and communion with God at some hour in the day to realise His infinite mercy and our relation and duty to Him : he would bring home to us that we must worship Him in faith and contemplate Him in love ; that He was our helper and guide and was always by us and ready to comfort us ; and that this life of communion with God was man's highest destiny.

We have said above that in the Mandir, Ranade felt that he was in the presence of the saints and prophets of old. Those, who heard his sermons and addresses, will remember that this was an idea to which he recurred again and again. He would say that it was not true that the lives of great men ended for us with their deaths and that the profit, we could derive from them, was merely by reading what they had written and deriving light and inspiration from it. He would say that from the saints and prophets who lived in our country or elsewhere we could derive great help in the moral and spiritual redemption of ourselves and the world ; and that we must derive it in the way in which it could be had. We had to visualise to ourselves the lives they lived, the great aims they pursued, the discipline they underwent, their faith and hopefulness and their other high virtues. When we made their lives real to us, then it was that the meaning of their lives came upon us in its full force and transformed, purified and elevated our minds and hearts. Had they been with us we would have gone to them, seen them in their usual surroundings, talked with them prayed and worked with them, loved and revered them. Could we not do something of the kind even

now though they were not present with us in their bodily form ? He regarded this as a duty we owed to ourselves and to the great and good men who had left noble examples for us. We might well recall his words from his commemoration address on the Telang anniversary : "We have a duty to discharge ; we all owe a debt of duty..... to feel for a moment that you are not of this world, that you are in some better existence than in this world and that your soul converses with their souls in the other existence in order to throw off its bondage".

Doctrine of Prophets

What are the chief functions of a prophet ? What is the principal work with which he is entrusted ? In viewing the life and the work of the great religious leaders of mankind, we find that their work is of a two-fold nature. (1) They move the hearts of their fellow-men inspiring them with deep feeling. (2) They bring to light new truth or truths which are new to most of their contemporaries. In a time of spiritual drought, these redeemers of mankind come up like clouds and cool the earth by pouring torrents of heavenly feeling. In a period of dullness and lifelessness they kindle burning zeal, faith and love in the hearts of their brethren. From the death-like slumber in which they find their fellow-men, they rouse them to the recognition of their much neglected duty to their God and their brethren. They either brought to light new truths, or made new deductions from old truths or at the least brought prominently before the eyes of their brethren truths, which, having once seen, they had forgotten. This was necessary for raising them to a higher and nobler platform of moral life. Now there is nothing either supernatural or impossible in all this. Newton discovered the law of gravitation by means of the same natural faculties that you and I possess. His were merely more powerful than ours. The great leaders of religion, because they discovered and taught new spiritual truths, need not be thought to have possessed supernatural powers.

What should be our attitude towards these elder brothers of mankind, especially in regard to this side of their work ? If we believe that they were sent to preach new truths, should we not believe them ? Should we not take on trust whatever they say ? No ; we need not, we should not do such a thing. Newton not only

discovered a new truth in science, but also brought it within the intellectual grasp of his less gifted brethren. Prophets not only discover new truths, they also *bring them to light*. By showing the truth of their doctrines in various ways they recommend them to the spiritual faculties of their brethren. Doubtless there have been and there are still vast numbers of men who believe without seeing. No such thing is either necessary or proper for us; it is quite inconsistent with the unfettered spiritual freedom which theism demands from us. Besides, there is an *apriori* impossibility that a doctrine which is either conflicting to my reason or which transcends my spiritual faculties can be meant for my acceptance. When a prophet says "This truth is from heaven, accept this," let him show us by proofs irresistible the heavenly origin of his doctrine, and when he has done this, when he has made you see what he professes to see, believe him then, and not till then.

No Progress without Conflict

If things present seem to carry us backwards, not forwards, remember that is but one law of progress. To go onwards, we have to go back a little. Progress does not mean motion in a straight line. Scientists truly say that there are no straight lines in the physical world. Nor are there in the world of spirit. We have to be virtuous by fighting with vices; we have to be godly by resisting temptation. What is true of the individual is true, more or less, of men collectively—of communities, societies, and nations. Because we see dissensions, controversies, conflicts, race against race, caste against caste, class against class, we think that all this conflict, opposition, disunion mean that, in spite of education and other instruments of progress, we are going backwards. No; all this conflict means the stirring of minds and men's hearts. The spirit of the age is for progress—but before it can establish itself, it must conquer the ignorance, superstition, prejudice of ages. And it cannot conquer before a conflict. And the conflict must rouse passions, the blind forces of racial, caste, and class prejudice. But in the background of all this is the *Universal Mind* slowly, steadily asserting itself, conquering inch by inch.

—N. G. C.

Different Ideas of God

As the emotions through which we approach God, vary, so do the ideas we entertain of Him. To some the Almighty is a being of immense power whose wrath is to be deprecated by material offerings and sacrifices; to others, he is a hard task-master and rigid disciplinarian, whose will must be implicitly obeyed; while to a third class, He is the embodiment of all that is holy and pure and lovable and tranquil, whom the human heart spontaneously clings to and adores. This variety of notions, it would be illogical to say, argues the non-existence of the Deity or shows that He is an imaginary Being, evolved of human consciousness. It rather reveals the manifold attributes of the great Creator, some of which, being such as it cannot transmit, that medium of vision, the human heart, like stained glass ignores and allows the rest to pass through. As depending on the cultivation of the heart, these different views serve to mark different stages of human culture and may be characterized as high or low. When brute passions and superstitious ignorance are rife, it is fear alone, that coerces man into religion and at such times God wears a fearful aspect guiding the storm and wielding the thunderbolt or in His anger, visiting the land with frightful plagues and terrible devastation. As all the higher emotions still lie dormant in the human heart with only a potential existence, the other attributes of God are missed and strength alone adhered to. But as the moral instincts of men develop, the idea is a great deal changed. God is then the stern ruler who would exact rightful conduct and implicit obedience to His will, by holding before men the tortures of an everlasting hell ready to overtake the erring and the fallen, but wooing them also to faith in Him by the allurements of future happiness. Here also, personal fear is more or less the ruling emotion. Change the medium once more and there rises up to your vision, an all-loving Being who is as a father to the sinful and wicked as well as to the pure and virtuous, whose attributes challenge human love and adoration, who is, in short, the companion bird to the human soul perched on the self-same tree, whom the latter disconsolate and all in tears is to feel and know to be, rid of his troubles, his lamentation and sorrow. This is a high and ennobling idea and approximates closest to the truth. The two others also represent true attributes of the Supreme Being but they err in

choosing a few, out of a large number and overlooking the others. God is all strength, as the first view takes Him to be, but He is also something vastly more. He is a moral Governor of the universe, no doubt, but He is also an all-loving father, the guide and guardian of the human heart. As said above, this difference of views proceeds from the variety of the media through which the Divine Creator is viewed. As the *Bhagvadgita* expresses it "The good, the Gods worship. The Indifferent, the Rakshasas and Yakshas. And the Bad worship the hosts of demons and the manes".

Necessity of Prayer (2)

Prayer is one of the most inspiring means of keeping the heart true and firm, and in strengthening the will in the daily tasks of life. Its efficacy is recognized not only by men of religion but by all serious minded persons who regard life as something nobler than a "mere shuffling through." It has ever been to hardworkers a great mental and moral tonic. Gladstone always used to offer a short prayer before he rose to make a speech. Men like Lord Morley have advised the daily reading—the first thing in the morning—of such inspiring authors as Wordsworth, and Thomas a Kempis. The inspiration they bring lasts through the day and preserves a man from temptations and lapses in duty. Prayer is a daily moral discipline. And no man, who values his work in this world and would turn it into a noble and beautiful thing blessed of God and man, can afford to neglect it. We have come across the following prayer of Sir Robert Peel which that statesman said daily, when he was the Prime Minister of England. The prayer runs thus :—

"Dispose the hearts of all in high stations to adopt such measures as will preserve public order, foster industry, and alleviate distress. May true religion flourish and peace be universal. Grant that, so far as may be consistent with human weakness, whatsoever is proposed by myself and others, for the general good may be viewed with candour ; and that well and useful measures may be conducted to a prosperous issue. *And O most merciful father, if I should forget thee, do not Thou forget me !*"

Wisdom Tabloids (2)

Know what you want to do, hold the thought firmly, and do every day what should be done, and every sunset will see you much nearer your goal.

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Most people, when setting about their reformation or conversion, are much more anxious to spend their lives in doing difficult or unusual things, than to purify their intentions, and to renounce self-will in the ordinary duties of their position.

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Violence is transient, hate consumes itself and is blown away by the wind of heaven, jealousy dies, but the righteous thought is a pressure before which malice is powerless.

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No one can have a true idea of right until he has done it; any genuine reverence for it until he has done it often and with cost; any peace ineffable in it, till he does it, always and with alacrity.

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Avoid passion, which blindeth the judgment. Avoid faction, which maketh thee judge of all men as they agree or disagree with thine opinions, or thy side or party.

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He who would achieve great things must not be depressed by the stern grasp of life, for the way must be harder than he. Only by climbing over the sharp rocks which bruise the hands and cut the feet can the height of the summit be reached, but never by vainly attempting to wade through miry swamps.

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Wisdom cannot be found in books or travel, in learning or philosophy, it is *acquired by practice only*. A man may read the precepts of the greatest sages continually, but if he does not purify and govern himself he will remain foolish. A man may be intimately conversant with the writings of the greatest philosophers, but so long as he continues to give way to his passions he will not attain to Wisdom.

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It is useless to pour over holy Scriptures and sacred Shastras without a discriminating and dispassionate mind. No spiritual progress can be made without discrimination.

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If anything affects your eye, you hasten to have it removed; but if your mind is disordered, you postpone the term of cure for a year. Men are infinitely less solicitous about their moral than their physical state.

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Never speak ill of a person unless you are sure of your fact; and, even if you could swear to it, ask yourself: "Why do I make it known?"

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The slanderer, the back-biter, and the wrong-doer may seem to succeed for a time, but the Law of Justice prevails; the man of integrity may seem to fail for a time, but he is invincible, in none of the world visible or invisible can there be forged a weapon that shall prevail against him.

Self-Faith

From a poor boy, neglected and deserted by his own mother and father, left to struggle in this world, treated cruelly wherever he went, adopted as a son by a kind-hearted gentleman, Stanley rose by sheer dint of resolution and self-reliance to be a man of high thinking, of daring and perilous deeds of adventure. For all this the reader must turn to the fascinating pages of his autobiography.

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On every one of those pages, as I read them, I find, as it were, written "the glorious issues of suffering." Difficulties, dangers, vexations, disappointments, failures, humiliation—all that we call and complain of, as the trials of life, were Stanley's opportunities. His was not a repining soul. More danger there was before him, the more lion there was in him; he met it in a calm, imperturbable spirit, he turned it by the magic of his resolution to his side and he won. And it was so, because he had developed in him the character of "a finished man"—he was never irresolute and he was never in a hurry.

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But how came he to be "a finished man?" That is what we wish to know. The secret—if it be a secret—lies in Stanley's faith in and devotion to God. His was the temper of piety, and to it he acknowledges he owed what of good he was able to accomplish in life. "My belief that there was a God, overseeing every action, observing and remembering, has often come between me and evil. Often when sorely tempted, came the sudden strength to say: 'No, I will not.' It is for this strength that I am grateful." And Mrs. Stanley tells us that "baffled and bruised at every turn, orphaned, homeless, friendless, destitute, he was nevertheless rich in self-reliance and self-control with a trust in God that never failed him."

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This is character. It is the capacity to take life seriously and with cheerfulness, to make the best of its trials and temptations as tributary to our self-expression, not our self-repression, meaning by self the divine within us. That capacity comes with courage, obedience, and faith.

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Man must have self-faith to begin with, or else he can do nothing. Unless each of us believes in himself as a power, he must drift and decay. Each of us must start in life with the conviction rooted in his mind and heart that he has some mission in life and is born to leave it better than he found it. Children are our exemplars in this respect. They are daring naturally, unless checked and frightened; and they are daring because God has implanted in them the seeds of self-faith which acts spontaneously.

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But self-faith of itself, which means courage, must deteriorate into selfishness, and conceit, if it is not tempered by obedience to the highest that dwells in man. It comes where man acquires an empire over himself. Before we can govern others, we must learn to govern ourselves; and for that we must fill our minds with the highest and the best that we can think of—that is, God. "Thy will be done!, What wouldst thou have me do Father? I am Thine, Oh Lord."

—N. G. C.

Religion, Natural and Conventional

Human nature, as we observe it, in our daily intercourse with each other is largely hid from us behind a number of conventionalities. Somehow or other, men wear one face to themselves and another to their fellow-men. When we come in contact with others, how much effort is often exhausted, in concealing our real intentions and purposes from them. People in civilized societies speak to each other through forms, which have become crystalized into customs by long established social sanctions. In short, human nature is presented to us with so much overcrusting, that those moments when we happen to have a peep or two into genuine human nature, seem to be very precious to us, and those persons who can give us such an insight are reckoned as our best instructors. In fact true genius lies in the power of representing genuine human nature as distinguished from its conventionalities. This is the highest faculty we praise in a novelist or a poet.

Like every true genius in the world of literature, every true prophet of religion is also distinguished by this power, the power of discriminating between the natural and the conventional in religion. Think of the great names in the history of every religious sect, examine their utterances, and closely observe the life they lived, and you find a wonderful naturalness about everything they said or did. Their preachings abound with oft-repeated protests against the prevalence of forms. In one sense, they were all reformers. Approach them and you mark the smile of child-like simplicity always playing upon their lips; religion to them was the true breath of heaven, exhilarating, life-giving and natural. Twisting, torturing or constraining human nature in order to make it religious, was an idea remote from their minds.

Compare with these pictures of natural piety the numberless formalities into which religion has been clothed by the sects; mark the prevalence of signs and symbols. These symbols and conventionalities are easy of propagation. Men can easily adopt them, whereas the spirit of true piety long eludes the grasp. The conflict of the spirit to live religion is often intolerable, and many try to deceive themselves into a false idea of spiritual growth, by the adoption of these forms; consequently in the history of the world, we find that primary religion is always spiritual and unritualistic, and it is only



Ullal Raghunathaya

secondary religion where ritualism and forms prevail. It is the mission of the Brahma Samaj to preach really natural, life-piety in this land. The piety which consists in devoted and enthusiastic allegiance to truth, thorough self-abnegation of the heart, in unflagging, unwearied and fearless perseverance in duty, in loving and child-like leaning on the Divine will, and in thorough and unreserved consecration to the work of God—piety freed from asceticism or cant, and naturally pervading the whole life with a sweet and ennobling influence. We must steer clear of everything tending to degenerate religion to mere symbolism and mummery, and should give ourselves that culture of faith and work which can generate in us burning and fervid love of God and a truly devout and faithful spirit.

False Modesty

Every man, however humble, was a living factor. He was not a superfluous item but an integral element in the life of the community. Modesty was a good thing, but a man whose modesty made him think that he was a cypher, that what he did or did not do was of no account, and that he might remain a passive spectator while others fought and bled in the cause with which he sympathised, did himself and His Creator a very great wrong. We are destined to act, and every man must shoulder his share of the burden. We were so fashioned that if we did not act of our own initiative, we became helpless tools in the hands of more active, and it might be, less scrupulous men. Let us get rid of the paralysing modesty which would reduce us to automata. —K. N.

Ullal Raghunathaya

Ullal Raghunathaya, minister and president of the Mangalore Brahma Samaj, was born in February 1841. He comes from a family well-known for intelligence and culture among the Saraswat Brahmins of Kanara. His father held the place of a District Munsiff and was a renowned Sanskrit scholar. Being of a very religious turn of mind from his boyhood, Mr. Raghunathaya did not covet positions of emolument or power in his public service, did not rise higher than the place of a Translator in the Collector's Office, Mangalore; but his activities were all directed towards the betterment of the society in

which he lived. In his younger days he is said to have been a staunch Orthodox Brahmin, so much so that he became quite a favourite with the Swami of the Saraswat Brahmins and the part he played in the regulations pertaining to caste matters is even now remembered with grateful appreciation by the religious head. Endowed with powers of keen insight and observation, Mr. Raghunathaya was not slow to perceive that the orthodox views which he then held could not bear scrutiny in the light of knowledge and truth, and had consequently to change his attitude. It is said that the teaching of the Bible in the Basel Mission School, Mangalore, and the influence of Rev. Mr. Kaundinya, who himself was a Sanskrit scholar and a Saraswat Brahmin by birth, had a great effect on him and that it was greatly feared he would turn out a convert to Christianity. Mr. Raghunathaya seems at this period of his life to have been a voracious reader of religious books of every kind and is reported to have come across some of the books published under the auspices of the Theistic Society, Calcutta. In his endeavours for the attainment of spiritual culture, he was joined by the late Mr. Arsappa of the Bilavar Community and both of them invited the late Babu Keshub Chunder Sen to Mangalore but as the latter was on his way to England he sent some of his co-workers to the place, chief among whom was Babu Pratap Chunder Muzoomdar.

This was in 1870 and since then Mr. Raghunathaya had to suffer trials and persecutions for his great zeal in the cause of Theism. It need hardly be said that he became an earnest and sincere Brahmo and worked very hard for the spread of Brahmoism. The first result of his adoption of the new faith was his excommunication by the head of his caste and Mr. Raghunathaya was the only person who braved the persecution all through. This excommunication however did not last long, as he was re-admitted into caste by the exertions of his father, who was then alive. This re-admission did not abate his fervour the least in his strong convictions and he would gather round himself a few friends and pray with them on a far-off lonely hill. He had intense faith in the efficacy of prayer and though he was subjected to much contumely and derision at the time, he would not swerve from the path he had chalked out for himself. Between 1870 and 1884 the Brahmo Samaj in Mangalore was confined to a few Saraswat friends of Mr. Raghunathaya and the Samaj work

consisted in holding prayer-meetings in one or other of the houses of his friends. It was in 1884 that the site where the present Brahma Mandir stands was obtained and the Mandir was built thereon. The worshippers belonged mostly to the Saraswat community and the prayer-meetings were held bi-weekly. But the members were subjected to such bitter persecution by the rest of the community that at one period of its existence the Samaj could count not more than two or three members. Mr. Raghunathaya however would not lose courage and held on as steadfastly as ever and it is no exaggeration to say that, but for him the Brahmo Samaj at Mangalore would have been a thing of the past. The same persecution, when brought to bear upon the members of the Arya Samaj which then existed at Mangalore, was triumphant at the destruction of the latter movement. To Mr. Raghunathaya belongs the credit of tending and nursing the plant of the Brahmo faith in its early days and though many other causes have latterly contributed to the growth of the Mangalore Brahmo Samaj, yet the services rendered by him are such as can never be forgotten. The visit of Babu Amritlal Bose in 1887 materially aided its growth and the number of members which was fast dwindling gained immense strength.

It was at this juncture that Mr. Raghunathaya met with the greatest domestic calamity. He lost his then only son in May 1889 and all the hopes which were centred in him were blasted and heaps of abuse were showered upon his head to the effect that his new-fangled faith was the cause of his domestic misfortune. To a man of less sturdy character, this blow would have been sufficient to quench the fire of his faith but with him it was otherwise. Calm and placid in his work he strove on without looking askance and Mr. Raghunathaya has lived to see the fruit of his labours in the accession of strength to the Samaj and its prosperity.

Domestic misfortunes one after another fell thick and fast over him, in that he lost his parents between 1890 and 1892 and lost several of his children also. Added to this in 1892 he was again excommunicated by the head of his caste for his failure to perform the *Shradh* ceremonies in the orthodox style and he has since remained ostracised. His grand-daughter lost her husband in the very first

year of her marriage and Mr. Raghunathaya was the first in his community to perform the re-marriage of this widowed granddaughter.

Egotism-the deceitful Foe

The people of this country daily gather flowers in the morning, to worship their family gods and goddesses if they have any. These flowers are generally gathered with the greatest care and are deposited in the cleanest of vessels. Just fancy the case of such a man who, at the time of sitting for his daily devotions, when about to lay those flowers at the feet of his favourite god or goddess, suddenly discovers some hateful and unclean insect, lurking amongst the folds of the flowers. How great must be his surprise then, and how sorrowful his feelings !

Are we not now and then thrown into similar despair by the sudden discovery of a deceitful foe even in the folds of the prayers and offerings we bring to the altar of God ? We shall try to name and describe this subtle enemy. It is the thought of self. In our strivings for spiritual progress, when perhaps we are fancying that we are safe, that we have overcome many temptations and have borne many trials, closer examination of our thoughts sometimes reveals to us that the first requisite of a truly pious character, has not yet been attained,—viz, we are not really seeking the glory of God. Not that we have no love for truth, not that we do not sincerely aspire to lay down our lives for the service of God, not that we are altogether devoid of pious sentiments or ennobling thoughts, not that we are not occasionally transported on the wings of disinterested love, but what makes us so sad and throws a shadow of black despair over our pious aspirations, is the discovery of this thought of self deceitfully mixing itself with our most pious thoughts. One who now and then prayerfully subjects himself to the strictest scrutiny, must have had occasions to shed bitter tears of despair at such a discovery. Yet the forgetfulness of self or in other words seeking the glory of God in all things, is the distinguishing feature of true piety. Let us ponder over the solemn import of the expression "Seeking the glory of God in all things." Give us a man, who achieves the greatest things in this world, who is crowned with success in every

department of work, who draws upon himself the love and admiration of his fellows by his words and deeds and is all the while considering himself mere dust and ashes. Give us such a man and we bow down before him as the best example of genuine piety. Give us a man, who placed in position and power, is nevertheless always ready to surrender that position and power if it but clashes with the work of God, and we instinctively love and honour such a soul. We do not mean that such men are very rare in the religious world, or that they are exceptions. God is never without witnesses in this world. History teems with biographies of such truly pious men and women. But for purposes of self-examination, it is a good thing to bear in mind, that the most deceitful foe, the last to leave the soul, is this thought of self. There are natures otherwise wise and sagacious, and given to spiritual culture, in which by some irony of fate, the *ego* preponderates in everything they do. Their obtrusive egotism is the most repulsive feature about them. In their works they find themselves everywhere and cannot dismiss the thought of self. Like children wondering over their lengthened shadows on the walls, they are filled with admiration at the shadows their words and deeds cast on the world. As men pat them on their cheeks, they cry with secret exultation "what prodigies are we." They forthwith proceed to make their greatness an object of study, and the more they ponder over it, the more they are enchanted with their own powers and performances. Like foolish girls looking at the glass and admiring their own beauty, they also secretly fall in love with themselves. It is extremely difficult for such natures to attain to true piety. True love of God cannot grow in the soul, unless we agree to surrender the complete mastery of the soul to it. We have been repeatedly asked, by the good and the great of the world "to love God with all our minds, and with all our hearts." It means that every other love should be surrendered to this. Every seeker of true piety then should be always on his guard against this secret and deceitful foe.

Religion and Life

Religion is judged by the fruits it produces. It cannot become a world-power without the development of a world of ideas, and without the presence of a *cultus*. Through such forms the new life

is presented to man in a tangible form. But it must never be forgotten that dogmas and rites have value only in so far as they are expressions of a Spiritual Life of which they are no more than a clothing. The clothing must change. A criticism has to be exercised on the forms of religion in the very interest of the substance of religion itself. It is of great value when it proceeds from a desire to make clearer the very nucleus of religion. Such is the present situation. We discover radical transformations within all the provinces of life, and religion cannot possibly withdraw itself from these. We have to exercise an open and reverent criticism of the traditional forms, and the nucleus of religion will be able to develop all the more on account of this. In this spirit, freedom will not lead to negation, but to an increase of depth. But this will happen only when we bring to full effect the new life that develops within religion. This will protect us against all harassing doubts and will give us a secure foothold in the storms of the present. It is life and its creativeness alone that guarantee the truth of life.

—*Eucken.*

The Tests of True Piety

Self-complacency in matters of spiritual progress is an unfailing sign of the suspension of spiritual life. There are many who nominally keep their connection with religious organizations, ostensibly conform to its rules and ordinances, outwardly seem to move with the onward march of events, but in reality, are nearly at the same point where they began their spiritual experience. They often mistake a faint sympathy with a system of religious truth for really fulfilling the demands of an internal spiritual life. Their daily lives by constitution or habit free from all those dark and glaring faults of character which often embitter our moral relations in this world, seldom give them occasion for those outbursts of repentance and moments of self-inspection which generally precede the regeneration of the soul. Their lives giving them little trouble in this way, and their cold sympathy with truth giving them a false satisfaction, they out-wardly keep pace with mere forms of religion, and seldom ask themselves whence did they start and where they stand. Their conception of piety is also materially defective. In their opinion it consists in an inoffensive and quiet conformance to good rules. That aggressive goodness which only springs from the

fountains of living enthusiasm and goes out in search after opportunities of serving man and serving God, that fervent love of truth which delights in new acquisitions and stores up pebble with a wonderful and thankful heart, that living conscience which blazes forth in the divine glory for the furtherance of right and the suppression of wrong, that devout ecstasy in which the soul melts away in etherial rapture and loses itself in the contemplation of the awful verities of the unseen world, these are states which they never aspire after. But, what, after all, is religion worth, if it does not communicate this life to the soul. Of what good would the beams of the morning sun be, if they did not call forth the manifold forms of life and beauty in the universe?

The first great spiritual result of the advent of true religion into the soul is the freedom of the spirit. No sooner is the soul allowed to behold the Majesty of God, face to face, no sooner does it taste the sweetness of communion with Him, no sooner is it placed in communication with the living fountain of inspiration and life, than is it at once set free from the thralldom of human law. By law we mean external authority that has its sanction in books and usages, or the breath of public opinion. A truly pious man is always a *non-conformist*. He is placed above all conventionalities. It is impossible for him to be an idolator, or a worshipper of books and great men. He is perhaps unsurpassed in his profound admiration for anything that is good or holy, either in books or in men, but the humble and faithful homage of his soul is for ever directed to the one source of inspiration, on which alone he depends for everything that is good and holy in him. He acts rightly and moves in the path of righteousness, not because this book or that prophet has so ordained, but because to do the right and to seek righteousness have become the breath of nature with him. His nature is guided and controlled by a superior law which transcends all earthly prescription. Like the morning lark, soaring high in the heavens, he has an ocular evidence of the glory of light and totally forgets all book-bound, creed-bound or man-bound rules of life.

The second great achievement of true religion in the soul of man is the creation of a burning and ever active love of righteousness. It is strongly manifested in the soul by an intolerance of every form of unrighteousness. It burns there like a living fire, not only

shedding light and dispelling darkness from the path of the soul, but spreading by contact, over other minds, and seeking to burn all forms of evil, social or individual. A truly pious man is necessarily a *Reformer*. His bold and firm axe is always ready to be laid at the root of every description of evil. Backed by omnipotence and the wonderful power of truth, he knows not how to fear the frowns of man.

Side by side with this living righteousness, there is warm love for humanity. This love, is essentially aggressive in its nature. It does not wait like the bloom of flowers to be gently called into existence, but always goes abroad seeking new conquests. The secret spell with which such a man enchants the minds of others and secures a wide-spread influence for himself is love. He is loved and admired most, because, he in his turn loves and admires best. A truly pious man is necessarily a *philanthropist*, a warm lover of mankind. His steps naturally lead him to the haunts of vice; the abodes of sorrow, and the dens of wretchedness and poverty. Though, strong and active in the tolerance of wrong, he is yet more than a woman, in the tenderness of his heart. The milk of his kindness is ever flowing at the sight of woe. He blends his tears with those of the poor, and toils with self-forgetful earnestness for the redress of their wrongs.

These are the tests with which we should always measure our progress in piety. The sooner we liberate ourselves from the thralldom of mere forms and conventionalities and learn to place ourselves in direct communication with the source of all inspiration and life, the sooner we bring ourselves to believe that the cause of reform and of philanthropy are inseparable from the cause of true piety, the sooner we learn to regard a mere quiescent, passive and stagnant faith as virtual suspension of spiritual life, the better for the interests of our soul, and also for the prospects of the movement which providence is developing amongst us.

Aim of Life

What is the aim of life? Is it to enjoy the pleasures of the world to the full, or is it to weep and mourn constantly over the trials and misfortunes of the earth? Neither is the proper attitude of life. We ought to forget ourselves and do our duty. "Act, act in

the living present," says the poet. Do not procrastinate your actions to the future, because it may never be yours, and do not allow yourselves to be paralyzed in your actions by painful remembrances of the past. We have only control over the present moment the "eternal now."

The Sea-Shore

Amidst the unwearied toil of the hard struggle for life in these days, a short hour free from work towards evening becomes a necessity and cannot but do good to those who can command it. To spend such an hour of leisure with most profit to our health of body and soul, the sea-shore is perhaps the fittest place. The cool and fresh breeze that blows there is a great reviver of the spent energies of man. The beauty of the various views the sea presents and the music of its waves have power to dispel every care and make us fresh again. But very few of us lay ourselves open to the full influence of all these. We carry our affairs in our minds even to the sea-shore. Though physically absent, they wholly engross our mind's eye. It is no wonder then that our senses seem dead to the charms of the objects around us. The glory of the sun-set, when the western wave is all aflame with the splendour of the broad sun, resting on its surface, we have no eyes for. We cannot hear the pleasant music of the ripples of the setting tide mellowed to greater sweetness by the distance, when the moon has just risen and made every little object cast its long light shadow. We cannot be brought to a mood of Divine contemplation at the sight of the sea, the emblem of Eternity, which has been from the beginning of the world and will be long after innumerable generations of men on its shore, have come and gone like its own waves and left not a trace behind. The sea, about the monsoons, when its waves furiously lash the shore making huge stones under them rattle and seem bent on sweeping it away, cannot give us a glimpse however imperfect into the infinite power of God. Thus the most striking things in this world, that should remind us amidst our toil of the Great Maker who can comfort us on our cheerless track through this world, have ceased to do so. Few seem ever to be aware of the existence of all these things around them. How then can they speak to us? We are thus on the high way to worldiness and want of cheer in this world. From

such a dreadful state, we can never escape too soon. We must therefore learn to lay aside our worldly affairs in presence of the mighty works of God and enter into their meaning. So shall a short hour spent in this way shed its soothing influence over the whole day and bring us nearer and nearer unto God.

Kind Words

There is so much sorrow and suffering in the world. There is no heart that has not felt the sting of pain; no eye that has not shed the tears of anguish. The struggles of the soul, the bruises of the heart, the awful solitariness of the mind, though they pass unnoticed, are none the less real; and only a sympathetic and kindhearted person can discover and understand the silent agonies of the striving, struggling soul.

Why then increase the suffering, the burden of our fellowmen! Rather let us know the wonderful power God has given us and understand the true nature of the gifts of speech. Let us not abuse the gift and wound the feelings of our brethren by addressing unkind words to them and judging their actions with harshness. We ought to control our vanity so as not to add to the misery of others.

In whatever sphere of life we may be, we always have some power to relieve misery and can lend a helping hand to the struggling and the poor. Above all let us remember that we can speak kindly and cheerfully. We have thousands of opportunities and if we can only speak a kind and encouraging word how much good may we not do! All souls thirst for sympathy and kind genial words. The timid and the weak long for some helpful tenderness, some word of encouragement that will cheer them up. Many persons pass through life unnoticed. They have sighed deeply for some touch of sympathy, some word of kindness, some sign of brotherly love. Their parched lives would have blossomed and become fruitful if only the healing dew of brotherly love and sympathy and the sweet waters of human kindness had reached them. Many a genius would have illuminated the world if hard-heartedness and cruel neglect had not stifled it. The weak and the erring require some strong hand to lift them up. "Most of us with pitiful presumption rate our virtues so high that we hold ourselves aloof from those who falter and fail in the upward path, or

we make their struggle more difficult by looks of cold disapproval or words of stinging rebuke." We are not as other men are! This stiff, reproachful attitude is most unfortunate and will never raise the fallen. While hating sin, we must be kind towards the sinning soul for it is only in this manner that we will be able to save him.

Hence if we wish that there should be less of misery, sorrow and suffering let us throw off the stiff-necked, stern-eyed frame of mind. Let there be no more cold and dull formalities; no more bland, meaningless smiles. Let us all be gentle, loving, kind and sympathetic and remember that "kind words by their power of producing happiness have also a power of producing holiness and also of winning men to God"; and again those beautiful lines of Lord Houghton:

"An arm of aid to the weak,
A friendly hand to the friendless,
Kind words, so short to speak,
But whose echo is endless.
The world is wide, these things are small,
They may be nothing, but they may be all."

—V. A. Sant.

The Beasts in Man

The evolution theory of human descent has traced our origin through incalculable reaches of time and has given us the brute animals for our progenitors. As at present constituted, we see in us much that is foreign to the nature of beasts. Many would find it difficult to believe that we have any thing of the beast in us. Nevertheless it is a fact that all the amenities of human nature and of human life are the result of a more or less total elimination and forgetting of the beast. In the ordinary routine of daily life, when we walk over smooth ground, we pass for reasonable beings. The irrational in us never puts in an appearance. Yet that it is not wholly dead and gone, we may learn from many slight indications that it offers of its presence. But it is only in extraordinary coincidences of circumstances that the true test lies whether the beast in us has met its death or has only been silenced for a time by superior authority. When our patience with a man has been exhausted, when the power and wealth which we have been in the enjoyment of, has

loosened the hold of religion, public opinion and public sentiment on us, when we have received what we consider a most grievous and undeserved insult at the hands of another and on many such similar occasions is it that we afford the best materials for judging whether or not we have given the quietus to our beast. What is true of men in their usual capacity is true of the collections of men, called nations in their national capacity. At ordinary times, we only see them as nations of reasonable beings. But in times of great national crises of bitter wars and of mighty revolutions, when the terrible engines of destruction that human ingenuity has invented are at free play, then is it that we see the beast in all its fury lording it everywhere and defying its superior the reason. There are the beasts, then, within us. They do not wholly die. As man progresses in civilization and develops the higher faculties that he is blessed with, these beasts remain more and more in chains and 'learn to cower before the creature with wider reason', but they never cease to exist. They have only to break the chains and get loose, and they do get loose on occasions. When they do so, there is no silence and peace in the menagerie, but infernal tumult and disorder, the most horrible fury and insatiable wrath, unbounded lusts and unrestrained appetites. Let every one of us then acknowledge this fact and however prudent and pure and noble of hearts and cool of temper we may regard ourselves, let us never forget that there are fierce beasts chained within us and which may at any time get loose. This fact acknowledged, let us try and see if we cannot gradually get rid of the beasts altogether. Difficult indeed is the task and deceitful often the accomplishment, but yet it is one that it is our duty to attempt and never desist from.

Test of Faith

What is the true test of faith? A man may say that he believes in God and be regular in his worship and prayer. But, to find out whether his worship and prayer have really influenced his mind, his acts and conduct must be examined. It is here that the true working of the mind reveals itself. It is his actions that will show what his inmost belief is. If a man succumbs before some temptation, will not be just and honest for gaining some selfish end, all his professions about his faith are insincere. He has on that occasion

certainly disregarded his God ; and that is an impossibility to one who has vividly realised His presence. Hence in our introspections and contemplations let us carefully examine our acts and by their merit or demerit, judge the actual state of our mind. The Theistic Church has always insisted on purity and integrity of practical life and the principle underlying it is that if you believe in God, you cannot forget Him at any moment of your life.

Insult and Offence

Does insult really exist ? Has offence any positive being ? We believe not. Insult is in the mind only of the man who feels aggrieved. If your mind is strong and calm, there is no indignity for you. Nay indignity is dignity to the man who has acquired the dignity of faith, patience and forgiveness. The fragrant wood is said to yield only greater fragrance when struck with the axe. If you feel undignified when the world has tried to shear your dignity, you never knew what dignity really meant. If your dignity came only when men spoke in fine phrases to you, your dignity was only your imagination. But if you felt raised when men insulted you, and wore the crown of dignity when men threw live coals on your head, then indeed you showed the loftiness of character. Let us repeat there is no such thing as insult. Offence to the men of righteousness is what chaff is to the strong wind. The wind scatters the chaff without struggle, and is as clear and strong as ever. Men will treat you with harshness or mildness according to their mood. Men will say what is agreeable and what is disagreeable. But that which is known as harsh and fiery is only meant to melt the gold in your nature into brighter and softer lustre. And that which is bitter is often known to sweeten the nature of him who takes it kindly. It is the bitter that drives away the bitterness from the blood. And too many sweets produce nausea and bitterness. Every one knows how to offer an insult, but few know how to take the insult in right spirit. Every one knows how to offend, but few know the art of forgiving an offence. We fear insults and offences as we fear ghosts and goblins, only when it is dark within, only when we are cowardly, and alone. When there is light, when the Friend is near, and we feel strong, who fears the ghost ? We court insults when we fill our minds with wrong

notions of our dignity. Offence glides away from the meek as water from the lotus-leaf. Offence is in the mind of him who offends, and his insult falls back on his own head. He who throws up dust into the air has only his own head befouled. He that calumniates you only spoils his own good name. He that strikes the stone only hurts his own fingers. "Saul, Saul, it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks". Through wet and sunshine, storm and midnight, finish the work to complete which thou camest into the world. And let praise and offence, good repute and bad repute, draw you nearer, nearer still to God.

Congregational Worship

We hear it said that it is better to remain at home and pray alone. I have nothing to say against private worship. It is absolutely necessary. But the purpose of public worship cannot be served by your individual prayer. Being "Alone to the alone" is a quite different thing from your fellowship with other souls in prayer. Public worship is not the summation of our private prayers. In public worship there is a new element which is wholly wanting in one's private devotions. In private worship the son is with the Father. But in the congregation at worship there is the holy spirit of the Lord to bind us together into an aggregate whole. Then God Himself is fuller as it were and it is quite a new experience without which the *bhakti* element in us remains undeveloped. We all eat at home but why is it that we enjoy our dinners better in the company of our friends? There is a mystery in human fellowship—soul's contact with soul. And its presence is most prominent in public worship. We cannot ignore it without mutilating our spiritual nature. So to cultivate the acquaintance, in the spiritual sense, of the fellow worshippers on the one hand and of the minister as the centre on the other is an absolute necessity out of which originates congregational worship. The business of the minister is mainly to bring all the rays into a focus.

—D. N. C.

Improvement of the Soul

"We have just enough religion" says Swift "to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another". In this world where truth

is as yet militant, it is no wonder that there is an incalculable degree of difference of opinion among men on all religious matters. This difference has been the cause of ruin to men without number. If a man happens to differ from us on any point of faith, we become intolerant of him. The point may be either essential or very trifling. We do not stop to think about that. It is enough to make us denounce him as a wicked and godless man to know that he holds a different opinion from us about anything in our religious faith. As in other matters, so here too we ignore the possibility of our being in the wrong and his being in the right. It does not occur to us that he may have conscientiously arrived at his own principles of faith and that, therefore, it may not be his fault that he is at variance with us. All these considerations are entirely absent from our minds. And then we show our enthusiasm and love for faith by taking him to be the very incarnation of sin and hating him with all our soul as we ought to hate sin. We forget that bearing in mind our own frailties we ought never to hate any brother, however astray he may have gone and that it is our duty to love him and through love to try to bring him over to the side of truth. The incompatibility of the love of God and the hatred of any single member of the human family does not strike us. But how far does this enthusiasm and love for truth, as we think it, influence our conduct? Its influence extends as far as this only and no further. On all the most important parts of our conduct it has no effect at all for good. From what we have said, it is clear that we have not got that degree of real love for religion which ever keeps our duties from the greatest to the smallest, clearly before our eyes and holds us back from hating any man for his faith, much less a man who is really and designedly wicked. But not only this. Our devotion to religion is so weak that we do not feel drawn the more for it even towards those from whom we do not differ. So the love of one's own kind which is one of the primary objects of a religious life, we give up for a very minor thing through false pride which we mistake, many a time willingly, for real zeal in the cause of right. And thus the end which we seek in this life, the improvement of the soul, we lose in the very way, in which we entertain the false hopes of getting at it.

The Ideal

We are constantly liable to fall and if no help came, we may never rise. One source of such help we possess in the shape of high ideals, which so many people cherish. Whether it is some creation of genius, some historical personage, a neighbour or an acquaintance, or an idea of our own brains quickened into life and being, by our own imagination, that personage or idea often sheds a beneficent influence, when we most require it. At every stage of our progress, it urges us on to fresh efforts, to make our lives better and nobler than they are. Every step out of the right path carries us away from our ideal which makes the false step more bitter and necessitates renewed exertion in right earnest. Those who have thus got their ideals have ensured the bettering of their condition. Two dangers, however, have to be avoided, dangers which we have always to take account of and guard against. These proceed from our estimate of ourselves and our actions, which is as often incorrect as not. We are always liable to over-rate our merits and underrate the magnitude of our faults. If we do not take care, this self-deceit of ours is sure to circumvent us and foil all cherished hopes of improvement. For it is impossible that anybody should rise who is not aware that he is still on the common. If one begins to believe that he has attained to his ideal, then adieu to all further efforts to keep the position attained to or rise higher. Equally dis-appointing is the result, if one does not see in their true colour, his own faults and sins. If he succeeds in glossing them over to himself, how can he be brought to be ashamed of them and firmly to resolve to avoid similar falls? These two dangers taken note of and always avoided like poison, an honest effort to attain to one's ideal is the best known regenerator of human nature and its highest strength. "But as is the idol, so is the worshipper." If the ideal is not sufficiently high, no spiritual or moral elevation is possible. To the religious man, however, God is the living, ever-present ideal. His perfection is ever an object of imitation immeasurably distant as it is from the imperfections of the created being. Men can only hope to make approaches, however small, to his love, his tranquility and his purity, in this world. But, it is a great thing to have them ever before us. For here no self-deceit, no self-sufficiency can rest satisfied with its efforts. And as the hope is there, these men try and try, aye, forever try. Blessed are they who with

all their might thus engage themselves in this pursuit of the highest, for theirs already is the kingdom of Heaven.

Develop Yourself

It is the duty of man to develop all his capacities. There is always an ideal before men embodying the highest development of all their faculties. This ideal gives rise in the soul to the consciousness of the Soul of the universe. It is from the presence, conscious or unconscious, of this ideal, of this Soul of the universe immanent in the human soul that the latter derives knowledge of truth, righteousness and perfection. And the more the soul is conscious of this Ideal, the more it will strive to develop all its faculties and to approach the Lord of the World.

—G. B. T.

Truth and Love

Truth is the salt of the earth. What is life good for without it? What is any man good for who does not care for truth? If you ask yourself why you respect any one, you will find it to be because there is in him an element of truth. He has real convictions. He believes something. He cares for matters outside his own selfish interests. He is moved to joy by the sight of what is just and generous. He is thrilled with indignation by the knowledge of what is wicked. He believes in the things unseen. He believes in God. He believes in some great divine power above all, through all, in all. Without belief there is no earnestness, and without earnestness life is intolerable. Unless we are earnest about something, what is the use of living?

To believe something, even if it be mixed with error, is better than to believe nothing; for belief implies the love of truth, and this is the first step toward truth itself. There are two kinds of truth: inward truth, truth to One's self or truthfulness; and secondly, knowledge of reality or outward truth. Both kinds of truths are essential to goodness and happiness. They make the difference between right and wrong, good and evil, going forward and going backward.

But besides truth, there is another and an opposite virtue, which is love. These two make up the whole of goodness. Truth is one element and love the other. They are different and opposite qualities, but necessary to each other. Neither will suffice alone.

Some men have truth but have not love. Their truth is hard, cold, overbearing, dogmatical. They do not speak it in love; they drive men, they do not lead them. There is nothing attractive, magnetic, about them. They scold and rail at those who differ from them. We cannot but feel a certain respect for them, but we do not like them. What they say may be the truth, but we are not attracted by it. Truth without love does not seem beautiful.

So there are other men who have love but not truth. They are full of good-will, overflowing with sympathy, but do not help us, because they have no stamina, no strength of their own. They are disposed to give to others, but they have nothing to give. They sympathize with us whether we are right or wrong, good or bad. Their love, being without truth, does not do us good.

If you try to carry out truth or love to its ultimate separately, you spoil both. Take for example the case of a man who is in love with truth. "I will tell the truth always," he says, "regardless of consequences." What, will you tell a madman the truth? Will you tell a child the whole truth? Will you always tell all the truth to every one? Will you have no reserve? By such a course society will be dissolved. The early Quakers tried this plan. They tried to be perfectly truthful; to have their yea, yea, and their nay, nay. They said thee instead of you because to use the plural number when speaking to one man seemed to them false. One Quaker refused to wear clothes which had been dyed, because it involved deception. But what was the result? Avoiding false and wishing to follow the immediate impulse of the spirit, they presented the curious anomaly of an outcome of the most rigid formalism. Truth in the letter at last seemed to harden and freeze, and to destroy truth in the spirit. This is the inevitable result of a one-sided development.

Every good character is composed of truth and love. Think of the person you have loved best in the world. It was some one who had a character of his own, rooted in the love of truth and right, who would not give way, but stood firm according to his conscience; but

who, while thus strong in himself, was tender and generous toward others. He could forgive others, and be more tolerant toward them than toward himself.

It is this union of sincerity and good-will which constitutes the nobleness of a man. The man who is strong in some rooted convictions, who stands firm on his sense of right, and yet whose generosity flows steadily in a current of helpfulness to those around him, is the pillar of society. Such men are the pivots around which progress and improvement turn. They give beauty and dignity to a community.

—*J. F. Clarek.*

Faith (2)

Faith rarely receives justice at the hands of men. The majority of men speak of faith in one of two ways both of which are unjust. Some people say that faith is a form of mental weakness, a synonym for superstition. To them faith is equivalent to credulity. These men look upon faith as a weakness, a servile thought clinging to us from our primitive state of ignorance and savagery. And hence they desire the rapid disappearance of faith from the minds of men.

At the other end of the scale we have a class of men who look on faith in a different though equally unjust way. They say that faith is an exceptional gift—a gift of such a rare order that it can be possessed by a small number of specially endowed spirits. As it is not everybody who can paint a beautiful picture, or model a life-like statue, or can write a poem that would touch the hearts of men, so it is not for everybody to feel the faith that was the gift of Tukaram, Ramdas, St. Paul or Mahomed. It is a gift of a very special character which cannot be shared by humanity at large.

Both these views are essentially wrong. Faith, instead of being a weakness, is the primal necessity of our entire spiritual and intellectual life. It is the one faculty without which civilisation would be entirely impossible. It is the necessary condition of science, art, social life, of everything, in fact, great and worth attaining. Let us carefully examine our faith so as to satisfy ourselves of the truth of this view.

Let us look at faith in three of its leading forms. First, look at the simple faith of the cultivator. His entire life is based on his

faith in the regular movement of nature. He believes that in due season the heavens will pour their fertilising showers upon the earth; that the earth on receiving these showers will do her work of production and reproduction upon the grain that is sown and that in the fulness of time the harvest will appear. One year or, say, a dozen years, may prove to be famine years, but still the inner heart-felt faith on the husband-man is not shaken. However at times it may seem to the contrary, still the farmer knows and acts upon the belief that nature will not fail him. But it may be said that the farmer is an ignorant man and his faith must not be set up as an example. Let us then take the learned men of science. All their experiments and researches are based on two *assumptions*. The first assumption of science is that nature is governed by law. Is this not faith? How do you know that the sun is going to rise to-morrow? It is nothing but faith. It is on the faith in the universal prevalence of law that science is based and its results prove that the faith is justified. The second assumption of science is that there is no finality to the discovery of nature's secrets. Science believes that nature will go on unceasingly surrendering her secrets to the human search. Now that is faith. What is there except faith to make us suppose that nature will not cease to-morrow to reward science with any more secrets? All the structure of science is based on these two faiths—faith in the uniformity of nature's law and faith in nature's purpose to surrender unceasingly her secrets to human inquiry.

This is one form of faith. This form of faith does not require much surrender of the will on our part. Hence it easily comes to all. Everybody is prepared to believe in the uniformity of natural laws and that there is no finality to the growth of knowledge. But there is a higher form of faith. From faith in nature let us rise to faith in man, faith in our fellowmen. It requires a surrender of our will. Some friends propose to us the formation of a society or the foundation of an institute and say that the society or institute will do much good to ourselves as well as the people among whom we live. Here we have to believe in the sincerity of our friends. If we begin to be critical with too many questions, we shall be unable to do anything. Partners in business have got to surrender their will and believe in one another. But there is a deeper form of faith—faith required to form friendships and above all that intimate relationship which we call marriage. Husband and wife must trust one another throughout

their life's pilgrimage. Here is an act that requires a great ~~surrender~~ of the will. Unworthy doubts and suspicions have to be crushed and the individual has to believe in the goodness, truth and fidelity of him or her, whom he or she has chosen as his or her partner in life. Thus faith rises higher and higher in proportion to the surrender of the will required.

Now let us rise to the highest form of faith, *viz.* faith in God. The essence of this faith is the will to believe. As Tukaram and the other saints say, no man can believe in God by the processes of intellect. If his belief is to be a living belief, it must be an act of the will. Shall we put faith in this power, which is at the back of the universe, which demands righteousness and truth from us all? If we do, shall we be disappointed and put to shame or shall we be victorious? That is the ultimate question of religion and our hearts tell us that we must put faith in the Almighty Father. When we thus surrender our will, the whole of life becomes sweet, assumes a new meaning and our journey becomes a uniform experience of victory. The saints of God tell us with one voice that those, who have put faith in God, have never been put to shame; that in all their trials and temptations their God has stood by them and brought them out unscathed. There is no greater defence in this warfare of life than the protection of faith. All human efforts will fail. But this faith in the love, that pervades the world, will take us triumphant through every experience of life. We have proved nothing by the processes of the intellect. But we have proved the love of God by surrendering our lives and living the faith to which we have surrendered ourselves. When we practise this faith we feel that we are victorious. We fear nothing. We are afraid of nothing. What is there to dread when the Almighty Being is on our side? Who can be a more sufficient defender than He whose power brought into existence the whole of which we are parts? Let this become, not our intellectual idea, but the belief the experience of our very souls.

—N. G. W.

Act and Thought

Speaking of the motto "Accursed be he who thinks evil" a great writer says "This is a very great and lordly motto; marking the utmost point and acme of honour, which is not merely in doing

no evil, but in thinking none; and teaching that the first—as indeed the last—nobility of education is in the rule over our Thoughts.” When judging of others we have to go upon their own outward acts, their words and deeds. It is by these alone that we must interpret their character. There is no other way possible to us. But at best it is merely a rough and ready way of intimating or forming our opinion of a man. Being, however, the only way possible to us it comes to be regarded as the true one and leading to accurate results. If we are a little too prone to attribute motives to our neighbour it is because of our want of charity. It is not because we admit or are conscious that the acts of a man are not always a true and accurate index of his character. The truth of this will at once be apparent if each man examines his own case. When the object of our meditations is our own moral and spiritual condition, which of course happens very rarely, how do we judge of ourselves? “I have not murdered any man, I have not robbed my neighbour, nor even have I ever attempted to do so as I see many around me doing. I therefore lead a life of virtue, not a wicked life.” But is this true? Is this way of judging of ourselves or others right? If we look dispassionately into our hearts we shall see that it is not. Are we so sure that we do not wish a man were out of this world who comes in the way of our cherished interests either consciously or unconsciously, rightly or wrongly? Are we so sure that there is not lurking in some corner of our heart a secret desire for the wealth of our neighbour or anything else that is his? If we are not, our lives are tainted. We are not so virtuous and pure as we think. Sin primarily consists in the thought and not in the act. Act is merely the carrying out into effect of the thought, an outward expression, a translation of it. We may cherish a sinful thought and may wish from our hearts to put it into effect. But we may not be able to do so from a variety of causes. An opportunity may not offer itself. We may not have the power.

We may be afraid of the political or, if there exist one, the social sanction. Or there might be an instinctive abhorrence of the wicked act, though none at all of the thought. So if from any one or more of these causes, we stop short of the act it is small credit to us. We should have done it but for the hindrances and therefore we are as sinful and wicked if we only harbour a wicked thought and not put it into execution as when we translate it into an act. “The

soul is dyed by the thoughts," is the experience of an honest seeker after God. It is not so much by the acts that it is dyed. And in the case abovementioned of a man stopping short of the act on account of the instinctive abhorrence of it, the abhorrence gradually lessens as the thought becomes more and more familiar and at last the person is led to commit the act also. The common idea seems to be that spiritual merit and demerit are detachable from the human soul, that they consist in virtuous and wicked acts and not in the virtuous and wicked condition of the soul. The idea is, however a wrong one and leads to disastrous results. It is that which lies at the root of the strange phenomenon we often see of kindness towards the lower animals co-existing with faithlessness towards man in the same breast and many other similar ones. Acts thus are not the proper measure of the spiritual worth of a man.

There is another way in which mere acts are deceptive. In judging of others, we see the acts only but do not perceive the strength of the temptation. The issue of a fight does not depend on the strength or weakness of one party only but also on the strength or weakness of the opposing party. A comparatively morally strong man might be tempted into doing a thing which a weaker man might not be tempted into doing. The temptation might be strong in the one case and not so strong in the other.

The spiritual condition then of a man, does not depend upon the acts but upon the thoughts which are harboured by him. Thoughts should, therefore, be our principal care and the mind being so elusive, so difficult to keep in check, we must be ever wakeful and on the watch to see that no unbidden or unwelcome stranger enters there and to drive him away from the door if he attempts to force an entrance. Not only then must we do no evil, but we must not even think evil.

Co-operation with God

Religion only exists in the form of Experience—the Experience of discovering yourself to be co-operating with God. You will only be sure of it, after you have tried to live by it, and have discovered that only *it* can carry you along: that it is strong enough to enable you to deal with all situations—that it makes you a better man. If

we are in the Truth, working with the Truth, these are the results that ought to happen. It ought to be visible to the world at large that we have a faith which is efficient, a faith which masters us, and draws our strength out, so that somehow or other, by our belief, we do make something adequate and real of this life of ours. The world ought to see that we can put ourselves to use, that we are of service to all who need us, that we find life full of practical opportunities. It must confess that we come to the best of what it is in us to be; that we improve and grow and have funds of secret strength; and are in touch with the power that makes for good. Are you and I offering any such evidence to those who watch? And if not, why not?

—*Christian Life.*

Spiritual Dullness

Many are apt to think that, once a soul is converted, it goes straight to the goal of salvation. Nothing is more fallacious than this belief. Experience has taught us the sad lesson, that there are ups and downs after as well as before conversion. We propose to consider one of the many difficulties, the soul has to struggle with after conversion.

Even the best regulated minds have been forced to confess, that at times, there steals over the soul, a peculiar kind of stupor and for the time, it appears, as if the soul would never be able to overcome it. This stupor is accompanied by several troublesome ailments, such as, disinclination to exertion, hardness of heart and muddiness of intellect. There is no apparent relapsing into positive sin. On the other hand, the soul is found to go with almost a dogged persistence over its daily course of duties. The devotional exercises too are gone through with scrupulous exactitude. But there is no happiness nor progress. Searching the inmost recesses of the heart, we find there an amount of deep-seated discontent, which nothing can explain away and however fondly we try to persuade ourselves to the contrary, we are constrained to admit, that our souls do not grow. Nothing is interesting enough to stir or to rouse the soul from its sleep of apathy. The best sermons fall flat on and the most spirited exhortations fail to touch the heart. We do not see the disease but nevertheless it is not the less dangerous, for it is when the soul is

indifferent that it is most liable to fall. Temptations, then tempt with ten-fold force and the soul has not the strength to resist.

What is it, that brings about this sad state of the soul? Reflection shows, that two causes among others mainly contribute to this result. The first is habit, which appears to us in the double character of a friend and a foe. It is a friend at the first stage, when it habituates us to good, but later on habit acts as a foe, for the good when habitual does not help the soul to grow. When certain acts become habitual, however intrinsically good they may be, they cost the soul no effort, no exercise of energy. They consequently fail to further its progress. Even our prayers and devotions after a time become stereotyped and mechanical. It is, therefore, that we find good men, although of steady devotional habits, for years saying the same prayers. Their lips utter the same words, for the feelings that prompt them are not changed, Their souls remain stationary, or if they move at all they do so in a circle.

The first thing, a worshipper has to look to, therefore is to take care that his life does not become mechanical. For this, it is not necessary, that he should have genius. If he has it, so much the better, for genius will never let him grow dull and will always force him to grow in spite of himself. Genius is a perpetual foe of custom and it delights in brilliant departures. But if the worshipper has no genius he needs not despair. All that he has to do is to direct his soul to something which will tax its energy. Let him take up something which his soul will not find it easy to go through and then he will never feel dull. If he is of a practical turn of mind, let him set up a standard of action, which will cost him some trouble to attain to; if he is a soft man, let him aim at an ideal of love, which is beyond the phenomenal stage of alternate tears and dryness and his soul will never know *ennui*. It is cheap conquests only, that wear our nature. What we should see is that our souls are kept in a continuous state of exertion. Even if the exercise be about a little and unimportant matter, it is sure to do us good. Self-complacency the mother of rest, is simply ruinous to the soul. The distance we have to travel is great. What would be more foolish, than after walking a little, to exult that we have travelled a good distance? In the lexicon of the aspirant after salvation, there should be no such word as rest. He should be always up and

doing, and his watchfulness must have no intermission. If one standard of emotion and worship has been realised, he should set up another without loss of time, and if one course of discipline has become habitual, he should search out another and if need be create it, so that he might ever have opportunities for free struggle and strife.

One remedy for spiritual dullness is thus to keep the soul constantly engaged and to arrange, that it may have always new food to digest and new ideals to realise. But this is not all. There is another cause of spiritual torpor. It is the turpitude of our heart. We dry up not because we have too much of sentiment but too little,—because we have, so to speak, no reserve to fall back upon. In military tactics, it is one of the first axioms, that a good general should always have a reserve available for employment at critical moments, to turn the tide of victory, or to cover a retreat when it becomes unavoidable. So in spiritual tactics, the worshipper should store up in times of peace and prosperity, an extra fund of devotion on which he may count in times of adversity. How can we do it? By nursing our love of God into a *passion*. If one has a passion for anything, no amount of familiarity will make him dull. For instance, when a man is passionately fond of flowers, they never grow distasteful to him, although he may always be lip-deep in flowers. He carefully studies the laws of their growth and burdens himself with a thousand and one self-imposed cares, in order to see that his plants may grow the largest, the finest and the most sweet-scented flowers. So with flowers of humanity. Parents attached to children, never grow dull. Something or other always crops up which calls for their care and solicitude and feeds their love. Does a mother's love for her darling ever diminish? Never.

A true passion never flags—its resources are never exhausted. Its latent energy provides for all emergencies. The intensity of our love of God is a little above the vanishing point. Our love is like the shallow ponds one sees in villages. The first shadow of a drought dries them up and not a drop of water is left. But the Saints are like oceans which are always full. Who has heard of the Sun drying up an ocean? The Saints' love of God is a passion and it never allows them rest. In communion and separation, alike, they are in a state of chronic ferment. In separation, they strive for reunion

with a passion not even dreamt of by cold hearts. In union, they thirst for more. Their resources are inexhaustible, and they overcome with ease the most insurmountable of obstacles. —I. M.

Wisdom Tabloids (3)

(1)

Don't fear trials and difficulties for they make life worth having.

(2)

To know self and to know one's real position is bliss.

(3)

Where you see one, I see many, and where you see many, I see one. So we should not quarrel for creeds.

(4)

A man's religion is tested not by the long prayers and sermons he offers, but by his dealings with people. Examine yourself how you stand in this respect.

(5)

Where there is harmony supreme, purity's sweet fragrance blows all around.

(6)

A man may be popularly called or known as a saint but in reality he is not if he has not a well regulated life.

(7)

You are to out your own salvation by *your own* sadhana and *not* by the sadhana of others.

(8)

Sadhana is a process of the heart which no language can explain.

(9)

Popular religion is generally turned into a cloak for earning a living, fame and reverence.

(10)

Religion of talk, of knowledge, of poetry, of philosophy loses its balance before the trials of life; but religion of love, of work and of self-consciousness leads to true faith which *alone* availeth.

Self-examination and prayer,—keen examination and earnest prayer—are absolutely necessary for progress in spiritual life. They are necessary for the progress of the spiritual life of the individual, as much as for religious progress of a community. We often regret that our men do not come to the public services, which we weekly arrange for them in our churches and chapels and find fault with them for keeping themselves aloof, but we do not open our eyes and try to find out the real cause of this indifference and apathy. Do we consider what we give them? Do they get from us the real things they want? Any number of imitation toy-sweets beautifully displayed in silver and gold dishes will not attract ants to them—but place a little real sweet wherever you like, and lo! they will come in numbers to partake of them. —*Babu Sasipad Banerjee*

Work and Devotion

Our spirit is tried not so much by great temptations or afflictions, as by the worry of incessant work. There are times when we have hardly the leisure to turn our eye inward and we drudge on in a most dry and fatigued spirit. Civilisation has its evils. It multiplies the intellectual and physical wants of life, and creates conditions of life which minimise the intervals that we can easily give to solitary thought or to communion with nature. The soul longs to be refreshed by being left alone, but it is not permitted to be alone. It is kept continually amidst the din of outward activity, far from the stillness that fills its own inner apartments, and that yearns for a corresponding calm around. What are we to do at such times?

God is our teacher and the world a great school. All is not well with us, if we cannot keep ourselves cool and unruffled amid the strain of hard work. God is merciful, and, knowing how weak we are, He forgives much. He may forgive the impatience that we show at times, but still it is a weakness. We must long to be above it. What is our love of God, if we cannot at all times, and through all changes of circumstances, keep the soul in an attitude of uncomplaining loyalty? Let us be thankful for the opportunities of discovering our shallowness that are given to us.

God is our Master, and it is not for us to choose the kind of service that may be required of us. Milton comforted himself in his blindness, when tormented by the consciousness of his enforced inactivity by the thought that suffering too was a kind of service. In the same way, we may reflect that work too is a kind of worship. Serene days come only now and then. We long for their return, but they do not return at our bidding. We must adapt the spirit to the conditions imposed upon us. The worship of work is harder to learn than the worship of thought. For work rises to the dignity of devotion only when it is lovingly and joyfully performed; and it is most difficult to preserve the mind in such a mood always. But we must try. Our one resource is prayer. Let us pray more and more to be always in an obedient and reverent spirit. Dryness in work is due to want of *faith*. Are we serving God? Is He with us? Our sufferings, cares, disappointments—is it for His sake that we endure them, or have we gone on a wrong track, pursuing our own will instead of His? The mind must be clearly made up on these points before we can expect to have the sweet consciousness of serving our Master.

Besides the fixed times of daily worship, brief prayers at short intervals are necessary. It cannot be expected that such efforts should always be sweet and immediately refreshing. But they must be persisted in, nevertheless. The oftener we try to approach God, the better. Not a moment of sincere uplifting of the soul towards God can be without recompense, though the recompense may be long hidden. We may cheer ourselves by looking back to the past and seeing how much that then seemed dreary and useless toil, has resulted in the attainment of spiritual strength. —I. M.

Devotional Reading

My Brother, have you any difficulties, trouble and disappointments? Then, turn to God, meditate on Him, pray to Him and you will have that rest which you seek. Learn to think of Him whenever any occasion is too heavy or burdensome for you and you will have that faith which can remove mountains of difficulties. In case you have a pressing want, then also turn thou to Him who fulfilleth all our desires and if your desire is legitimate He will

surely satisfy it. Be not downcast, my brother, under any circumstances but always consult and take the present help of thy best Friend. 'Our God is a present help in all troubles', so said one who never failed to get that help whenever he needed it.

My brother, seek within your own humble life the merciful dealings of God and trace the hand of providence in the history of your small life and you shall have true knowledge of God such as you cannot have by looking elsewhere out of you. Says the saintly author of that extremely beautiful book "Theologia Germanica", "Therefore although it be good and profitable that we should ask and learn and know, what good and holy men have wrought and suffered, and how God hath dealt with them, and what he hath wrought in and through them, yet it were a thousand times better that we should in ourselves learn and perceive and understand, who we are, how and what our own life is, what God is and is doing in us, what he will have from us, and to what ends he will or will not make use of us." The work of God in us is that which matters to us the most, and is meant by God to be the chief means of our own salvation, and hence what knowledge of God we can get from these dealings of his with us is the surest and most infallible. Verily our own life is a scripture wherein is written the infallible word of God.

My brother, read the Scriptures often and often : let the word of God that is within them be the meat and drink of your soul. You will find therein the consolation that your weary soul may be in need of : you will find therein the strength which you might require to fight against temptations. The heritage of a true seeker in this age is vaster than it was ever before. Before him are found all the scriptures of the world open. The Bible, the Koran, the Upanishads and the Gita, and other Scriptural books of the world are the possession of every seeker today. O brother, how great are these riches which you can make your own ! Read the truths that are in them, meditate on them, assimilate them and make them a part of yourself. The more you will do this, the more will your lower nature be eradicated and your higher nature will shine through you. Nay, even the divinity will shine through you.

The Golden Key

The physical universe is a revelation of God. To the unsophisticated eye of reverence, it reflects its Maker, as a great work of art shows the artist. It reveals His power, His wisdom and His love. Science has built up a general conception which it calls Force—the invisible back-ground of all phenomena. Agnostic philosophers have described it as an infinite and eternal Energy from which every thing proceeds. According to their philosophy it is one, invisible infinite, and eternal, the same to-day, tomorrow and the day after, the unchanging substance in the midst of things that change. It is this force that is manifested in the physical universe, in its manifold forms. Now it is perceived in the strong current of the river, which in its downward course sweeps away every obstacle from its path; then we behold it in the hurricane, the terrible tornado which descends with sudden fury and spreads havoc over the places it careers through; again we feel it in the tremendous earthquake, which buries under heaps of ruins fair cities that once resounded with the din of traffic and the hum of surging crowds. Everywhere it is the same Force, the same eternal Energy welling up in phenomena. But what is this Energy? How can we conceive it except by referring to some internal spiritual experience in us? Where else but in our will have we experienced an invisible source of a visible motion? Say whatever the philosophers may, the mind of man will ever exclaim with the Bhagavatgita—"The finite is but the garb of the Eternal Spirit."

As the universe manifests the power, so does it reveal the wisdom of God. As Dr. Martineau says, a thing which requires the highest efforts of the intellect to understand, could not have been produced by any blind and unreasoning Power. The presence of order,—of a system of nicely adjusted inter-relations, surely points out an orderer. And when we find all that far-reaching system always tending to perfection, to some ultimate good, we cannot divest our minds of the sense of wisdom in that Orderer of the universe.

It also reveals His love. Emerson says that "the first man, according to a legend of the Gautama, ate the earth and found it deliciously sweet." To the natural simple and pure heart, the earth

is deliciously sweet. Every creature living the life of instinct finds it to be so. From the little insect that comes to life and passes through all its stages of childhood, youth, age and all in the course of a few hours to the elephant that lives for a hundred years, every creature of instinct enjoys life as a thing deliciously sweet. Look to the bees sucking honey from the flowers, or the butterflies chasing each other or the birds responding to each other's note from hidden recesses in the bowers, or the fish playing about in the transparent water, look to them and say, whether life is not sweet to them. What else but love could have made the world so sweet to these creatures?—a love they all share but do not perceive, and for which no gratitude is asked of them. Hence is it that to the eye of reverence, the beauty and loveliness of nature is a token of God's love.

But the physical universe does not exhaust the goodness of God. There is another revelation. It is the mind of man as reflected in the actions of men. Here we have a two-fold experience—experience of the thoughts and actions of contemporaries, and that recorded in history. When studying man, we discover a new element which we never discovered in the physical world or in animal creation—it is the mysterious and awful sense of right in the heart of man. It is at times as convulsive in its effects as an earthquake. On account of it man experiences heights of joy or depths of remorse unknown to other beings. All history is the record of the struggle that this sentiment has maintained against the passions and prejudices of men. And it is the figures of those, in whom this noble sentiment was triumphant, who succeeded in subjugating their passions to the mastery of this sentiment, before which we instinctively bow. Moral worth is a God-anointed Sovereign that exacts homage even from the most depraved of men.

Thus we find that while the external world represents the power, the wisdom and the love of God, the world of man bears witness to His holiness. His power and wisdom, love and holiness are there permanently revealed and waiting to be found out and used for the purposes of salvation. But the world of matter, or the world of man, are both sealed books to the unspiritual eye. Before you can behold God in them, you must find God in your heart; in other words, direct revelation of God in the individual soul is the only key

to unlock the treasures that are to be found in the two worlds. Thus instead of the great men of the world being mediators, between God and man, God is properly speaking the mediator through whom alone, we can see all that is holy in man, all that is divine in the universe. Indeed, without the golden key of God's revelation of Himself to the heart, all other revelations of Him are of very little use.

—I. M.

Self-Government

By self-Government we mean, governing or controlling the self. The greatest lesson that individuals have to learn is that of self-control. Without it there is no salvation and peace to the soul. The man without self-control is like a reed shaken by the wind, a feather caught in a storm, a rudderless bark on a stormy sea. He is a hell unto himself for the indiscriminate way in which he follows his inclinations leads to terrible sufferings of body and mind.

There can be no truly religious life unless we are prepared to purify our hearts by governing ourselves. Creeds do not help a man who allows a free rein to his passions. How can this theological affirmation or that denial cure us of our sins of omission or commission if we do not curb our passions? The exercise of self-control is the essence of spirituality. "By self-control a man manifests his divine power and ascends towards divine wisdom." He then shows himself to be a self-originating cause instead of being merely the effect of his environment. With the power thus acquired he rises higher and gains noble and correct ideas as to his own self and its relations to God and the world. Truth lies hidden to the man who does not strive against the darkness within him. In guiding himself by the light of his reason and conscience a man reveals the divinity that is in him. Who that aspires after a truly religious life can deny that self-control is essential to the realisation of that aspiration? Alexander the Great, Cæsar, Charles the Great, Napoleon and Hannibal—what great conquerors these were! But greater than all these is he who conquers himself. Did Wellington snatch victory out of defeat at Waterloo? Well, Waterloos rage in every human breast and there ought to be a very large number of moral Wellingtons.

“When men both depart from and refuse to practise self-control, then they fall into the great and dark delusion of separating religion from conduct; they then persuade themselves that religion consists, not in overcoming self and living blamelessly, but in holding a certain belief about Scriptures, and in worshipping a certain Saviour in a particular way; thence arise the innumerable complications and confusions of letter-worship, and the violence of bitter strife into which men fall in defence of their own formulated religion. But true religion, (which is Being and Doing and Living) cannot be formulated and needs not to be defended. A man begins to practise religion when he commences to control himself.”

Prayer (2)

Prayer, in order to be successful, must be always earnest and genuine. Let us tell God what we feel. Let us always avoid unnecessary repetitions and the use of vague words and phrases. Let your words be simple and sincere, earnest and brief. Let the Lord be convinced that you speak not from a hollow heart, but from a heart full of emotions, full of consciousness of sin, full of a sincere desire to cast away instantaneously the trammels of sin and wickedness. You should feel as if you are in a diseased state of mind, and that you do not like any longer to abide in wickedness. You should not only say, “Lord, save me from sin,” but feel the enormity of your wickedness, and seek to be emancipated from sin at this very moment. You must not wait till tomorrow; you must not say, “Father, allow me to stretch myself now in indolence on the couch of intemperance and iniquity, and tomorrow I will think of reformation.” No, if the sinner wishes to have his prayers heard by the Lord of Mercy, he must show that at that moment he is sincerely anxious to cast away the evil from which he asks deliverance.

We should not only be earnest and sincere in our prayers, but we must always pray for the right thing—the one thing needful. What is it we should pray for? Not for rain, not for pleasant breezes, not for outward prosperity, for the luxuries of this world, not for bodily gratifications, not for riches or fame. For one thing only shall we pray unto the Lord, that we may always abide in his temple and see His holy and loving countenance, that we may always enjoy quiet

and sweet communion with the Lord. We desire that wherever we may be we shall have the Lord with us, that even in moments of activity and worldly occupation we may now and then turn to the Lord, in order to enjoy silent communion with Him. That is the object of life. We may pray to the Lord for physical blessing; but my brethren, are we sure that those are conducive to our real welfare? May they not turn us away from the Lord, may they not make us worldly-minded if we obtain them? Let us leave all these issues in the hands of Providence. Let us simply say, in regard to temporal matters, in regard to the things of the body and the things of the world,—“Whatever is good in thy sight dispense unto me.” In regard to spiritual blessings there need be no wavering; we have one course clear and open before us. Pray for spiritual strength, spiritual wisdom, the light of God’s countenance, for purity, righteousness, peace, and truth. For all these pray, and pray with unwavering and steadfast hearts; pray without any doubt or any wavering for we are sure that it is the wish of the Lord that we should have those blessings. While we pray unto him for feeding, strengthening, and purifying the spirit, we are sure that our prayers are consonant to the Divine will. We do not want anything which the Lord does not like to give us, but our prayers are in unison with His will—the human will harmonising with the Lord’s will, when we pray earnestly and sincerely for spiritual blessings. We therefore need not be afraid of disappointment. Whenever we open our hearts in prayer and devotion unto the Lord for purity, truth, wisdom and righteousness, let us be absolutely certain that our prayers will be heard. Do not, then, pray for the things of this world, but seek one thing only which you are sure to have. Say, with the Psalmist, “one thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord.” If that be your only object, you may rest assured you will day by day grow in purity and righteousness, through prayer.

—K. C. S.

The Spirituality of Nature

Truth is old but it never gets stale. Things retain their freshness in proportion to the amount of truth that there is in them. There is in the inmost depths of the soul a longing for truth, a

sympathy with what is genuine and real which no acquired taste for the false and artificial can extirpate. The masterpieces of art, the most delicate imitations of nature, do not bring to the soul that sense of largeness and freedom, which a walk in the fields, or one moment's gazing at the setting sun gives us. Nature is the mind's own home. Her beauties have inspired the songs of all ages, and we judge of the genuineness of poets by their fidelity to nature. A May morning, or an Autumn afternoon has in it richer treasure than any monarch gloried in.

All teachers of truth, all that help to restore to the soul its own grand simplicity, its own transparency, in which truth is faithfully reflected, are great and worthy of veneration. Nature too, is a teacher of truth. She is indeed, the most efficient of all teachers. The germs of truth are within us, and to teach is only to help those germs to grow, to remove all that hides and chokes them. And whoever helped to make the chords of the innermost soul vibrate so much as nature? She has in all times chid man's forgetfulness of God? She has revived that decaying sentiment of awe and wonder which leads man up to the contemplation of the Infinite. She has made man feel helplessness and littleness. She has taught man to prostrate himself before the uncontained Beauty. ~~She~~ gives to the flowers their bloom, and to the fires of heaven their glow.

Nature suits all moods. She delights the child and sends thrills through the mature soul, that has learnt to love and worship God. Her outward features are so grand and simple as to please all. Her inner meanings are so deep as to furnish ample food for the most profoundly contemplative spirit. Nature is the revelation of God by himself. The authenticity of this book of revelation is beyond suspicion. The sentences cannot be attributed to the authorship of any one but God himself. The volume is old, and beyond the reach of corruption.

It is absurd to talk of nature as inanimate. She is life itself. She is all soul—all thought and love. She seems material to us when we are materialised, overmastered by the unspiritual. Nature is divine, and we understand her best when we are godly. We then see in her the infinity of God. We read in her the thoughts of the Divine Mind.



Rev. Charles Voysey.

No experience of spiritual life is commoner than that of transient glimpses of the beauty and glory of God. At times what we have long striven to see is made plain to us, but darkness soon returns. In our struggle to recover these lost visions, we are wonderfully helped by nature. The fleeting glimpses of the spiritual world reveal to us a hidden splendour in the common things about us; and even when they pass away, the new light they have thrown on familiar objects does not wholly vanish. It is thus that our best moods leave their stamp upon nature, the various features of which become associated, in our minds with our brightest moments, and help us to foster their sweet memories. When flowers do not give us a foretaste of heaven, we feel that all is not right with us, and are impelled to make efforts to reach the high level we had once attained.

—I. M.

Religion—an affair of this world

Religion, in the degree to which it is true and worthy of man, comprises and unites the interests of his life. It is a sustained habit of contemplating human affairs in the light of ultimate issues. It therefore brings order and perspective into our conception of human life, correcting the abstraction of selfishness, the exaggeration of passion, and the urgency of desire. It throws upon the world the quiet light of the day, and brings out the deeper significance of man's deeds, as the sun the colours of the landscape. It is a principle of proportion and sanity, which gives its own place both to what is small and transient and to that whose worth is great and permanent; it is far less an affair of another world than men have usually thought.

—Sir Henry Jones.

Charles Voysey

(Born 1828, Died 1912)

Speaking about Charles Voysey it strikes me that he was a typically moral hero. Here was a man who ever followed truth, who ever spoke what he believed to be true, who ever did what he believed to be right "in the scorn of consequence",—a man who through a long life of eightyfive years never once flinched from bearing testimony to the truth as he saw and understood it. Moral courage is a far more difficult thing than physical courage. In a fit of enthusiasm, a man will do a physically daring deed. But how long

will that enthusiasm last? Under excitement a soldier goes and fights. But can he fight every day for eightyfive years? There is no such power in physical courage. Similarly of all other qualities of the flesh. For the flesh is frail and faltering. It can never consistently keep up. But spiritual qualities have continuous existence. They grow eternally, know no periods of pause. This truth is illustrated in the life of Mr. Voysey. He had a living under the Church of England. While in the service of that Church, a great truth about God came to him, viz. that the mercy of God cannot be bounded to any particular channel. The unlimitedness of God's mercy came to his mind with a strength of conviction that entirely captured and captivated him. How was it possible, thought he, that God's grace, which is wide as the world itself, should come only through one Prophet or one Saviour? No, as the sun of God shines upon all climes, and upon all conditions of men, so must the grace of God be ever given freely to all men, in the infinite diversity of their circumstances. That was the starting point of the great change that occurred in his life and in his career. Impressed with this conviction of the free unlimited grace of God, of His eternal goodness, he proceeded to another thought viz. that God is making eternal atonement; that God is so watchful, so loving that it was impossible to imagine that he can ever allow any gulf to yawn between Himself and man. How can a war, an estrangement, ever take place between God and men? Atonement is a process every moment in progress; God is ever reconciling His creatures unto Himself. The idea of one isolated atonement with God is altogether inconsistent with the ever-watchful, ever-living love of God. Such dissent from Orthodoxy brought in trouble and persecution and Mr. Voysey was charged before a court of law with teaching doctrines that were opposed to fundamental tenets of the Church of which he professed to be a priest and minister. The judges decided against him and gave him a week's time for withdrawing what he had been teaching. But Mr. Voysey declined the offer, saying that it was not only an insult to himself but to humanity itself. He severed his connection with the Church of England and founded the Theistic Church. Mr. Voysey's zeal was simply inexhaustible. To the age of eightyfive, he was working, thinking, teaching, preaching and even striking too, for he was by nature a fighter, a warrior.

He may fitly be described a soldier of God. For forty years his ministry—that wonderful course of self-renunciation, of self-sacrifice—was carried on unceasingly. When I was in London, I heard him preach; and what struck me most was that stimulating as was the preaching, the preacher was infinitely greater than the preaching. In the calm that seemed to settle upon his countenance, in the peace that was stamped upon his face there was evidence of the peace of God “which passeth all understanding”. —N. G. W.

Faces Towards the Light

In the wards of a large hospital the patients are often found lying with their faces towards the light. Place a plant in a room, and its boughs, like so many arms, will bend towards the window to reach out after the light. This longing for light is universal.

In the language of man light stands for knowledge and spiritual illumination. As the spirit of man longs for the light of the sun, so does his soul crave knowledge and the light that illumines what in him is dark. But this longing is in many hearts almost dead. In others, it is sought to quench it by the *ignis fatuus* of many a false and superstitious creed. What men need most is to have their faces turned to the Sun of Holiness for ever.

So gloomy and wicked are the thoughts that sometimes haunt our minds that we feel as if we could say with Macbeth even at dead of night,

“Stars, hide your fires!

Let not light see my black and deep desires.”

Could we then but remember that there shines for ever in the soul a Sun that never sets, whose light pierces through all barriers, and whose rays photograph all evil thoughts and foul desires on the soul, what a blessing it would be! Were the eye of our spirit, set steadfastly on the gloomy dungeon of our hearts where lie pent up many tyrannous passions chained there perhaps by social opinion or lack of opportunity, suddenly to fix itself on the glories of heaven lighted up by the rays of the Sun of Holiness, how overpowering the sight would be! How abashed we should feel, and how elevated? The mists of passion would immediately clear up. Though for a

time the light may dazzle, it will ultimately show us the way that leads unto truth. We have often turned up with our foot a stone or a brick that covered a patch of earth, and excluded from it the rays of the Sun. No sooner had we done it than a thousand little worms and insects ran here and there to avoid the light. Alas, how often are our inclinations like those worms, that cannot brook the light of the sun. We love the darkness of a deadened conscience. But on turning up the stone what else do we sometimes see? Do we not observe the pale blanched grass raising its head and eagerly drinking in, the solar rays and soon recovering its healthy green complexion and rejoicing in the light that is its element? Similar is the result when the Eternal spirit shines on the soul. Our weak and pale virtuous instincts are warmed into life. They look rosy again. Let us not, therefore, shut the windows of the soul. Let us not make a dungeon of it.

When after a cold rainy day the sun shines in the clear blue sky, men and animals rejoice. They spontaneously come out to enjoy the warm, vivifying rays. Those whose lives are passed in poverty and anguish, who feel the pangs and remorse after a career of sin, enjoy human sympathy in like manner. But unfortunately, charity is very rare. Men are readier to frown on the sinful and the down-trodden, to shut the gates of mercy on them, than to smile on the erring and miserable. How can we drag them out of their misery if not by sunny smiles? Rebuke the sinner by all means. But we must first purchase the right to rebuke by sympathising with him in his sorrows and trials. Let our reproaches seem to the erring only further proofs of our sympathy. Though human sympathy may fail, there is a Being who knows all our trials and all our weaknesses. His loving kindness will never fail. When the world frowns, we have only to look up and turn our faces toward the light of His smiling countenance. When He seems to frown, it is only to prepare us to look on His face beaming with a loving smile.

In the life of man, there come times when the mists of doubt and passion obscure his vision. Difficulties in the way of performing his duties loom gigantic through the mist of despair, and the sense of an all but crushing power of evil. The floodgates of light are opened,

and down come the rays of heavenly sun dispelling the mists
and making all the difficulties contract themselves, to their
natural small dimensions. —I. M.

Wisdom Tabloids

They that bow their heads before God may hold them erect
before the world.

* * * *

If in life's pathway there appears nothing ahead but a blank
wall, march boldly towards it and a gate will be discovered.

* * * *

We must learn to work with patience. With the tasks
appointed to us will be provided the power and also the oppor-
tunity.

* * * *

Success is the product of the sum of our years multiplied
by our good actions.

* * * *

Arrow swift the present sweepeth and motionless forever
stands the past.

* * * *

Character is the one security that, although listed, never
changes hands.

* * * *

Failure is often the result of waiting for other people to do
things first.

* * * *

A perfect specimen of physical manhood is good; a perfect
specimen of intellectual manhood is better; a perfect specimen of
spiritual manhood is best.

* * * *

In life, it is not so much what we do as the way we do
it that counts.

* * * *

There is as great vice in praising, and as frequent as in
detracting.

* * * *

To be angry is to revenge the faults of others upon ourselves,
 * * * *

Never part without loving words to think of during your
 absence. It may be that you will not meet again in life.
 * * * *

To do good which is really good, a man must act from the
 love of good, and not with a view to reward here or hereafter.
 * * * *

The wise through excess of wisdom become fools.
 * * * *

God delights to isolate us every day, and hide from us the
 past and the future.
 * * * *

Men of character like to hear of their faults.
 * * * *

Man alone is born crying, lives complaining, and dies
 disappointed.
 * * * *

It is a poor heart, and a poorer age, that cannot accept the
 conditions of life with some heroic readiness.
 * * * *

He who comes up to his own idea of greatness must always
 have had a very low standard in his mind.
 * * * *

He who is false to present duty breaks a thread in the
 loom, and the flaw will be seen some time.
 * * * *

God does not save us by clearing all obstacles out of our
 path, but by making us superior to them.
 * * * *

Past Sins

While other systems of theology attempt to solve the problem
 how past sin may be atoned for, pure Theism looks only to the
 eradication of present sin and the prevention of future sin. The cause

of this difference may be found in [the more accurate notions of sin and moral retribution and the more philosophical analysis of human nature which underlie the scheme of Theistic redemption. We have learnt to believe that to fight with "Past sin" is to fight with a shadow, for such a thing does not really exist, and is altogether an imaginary evil. All creeds and all men err that spend powder and shot upon this phantom-like foe. The whole battle is a comedy of errors. Past sin means literally a sin that is past and not present. If it is altogether an event of the past, then it is dead and gone, and does not exist now. Why shall we stultify ourselves by attempting to kill that which is dead already, to atone for an evil which is nowhere to be found? Let us suppose a man has committed a murder through excessive anger or envy. His real guilt is not the act of murder, which is a past occurrence but the anger or envy which led to it, and may be still present in the mind as a vicious propensity, though it may no longer manifest itself in action. Words and actions are not in themselves right or wrong. It is the will that is righteous or wicked. If a man's heart is corrupt and cherishes impure desires, he is guilty before the Holy God, though there may be no uncleanness in outward life. He may have ceased to commit murder, robbery, theft, adultery and other outward crimes for some time. In the eye of God his sins are not past but present. His all-searching eye sees that the evil propensities and inclinations from which those crimes originated, are still present in the sinner's heart, and only need favourable opportunities to call them forth. They are asleep and inactive, not dead. They rise and work mischief as soon as temptations come in their way and stir them up. Our lives bear testimony to this truth. How often do we find that our corrupt propensities, though apparently subdued, are not really gone, and that our cherished vices though not manifested in the shape of external deeds, still cling to the heart. There is no glory and there can be no consolation in the fact that we have ceased to rob and steal and murder. So long as our wicked desires are not eradicated, we are sinners. The question we have to solve, if we are sincerely anxious for our salvation, is not whether outward vices and crimes are past and gone, but whether the vicious propensity—the criminal will—is a present fact of life. That is reckoned a "Past sin" which has been plucked out, root and branch, from the depths of the heart. True salvation means the emancipation of the human soul, not only

from outward vices but also from carnal propensities,—the annihilation of every evil desire and the very liability to temptation and sin.

—*The Minister.*

Prayer (3)

The secret of a truly religious life, a life that is to be lived "true to the kindred poles of heaven and earth", is the power to pray. From day to day, a man, who would attain the freedom of the soul must cultivate the habit of regular prayer, when in silent thought he must ascend in spirit to the throne of God.

At such an hour, he must learn to withdraw himself from the cares and worries of the world, and must realize that God is in the Heaven and all is well with the world. If a man gathers sustenance for his soul by this daily communion with the Author of his being, the Sustainer of his life, the Inspirer of all high resolve and worthy action, his whole worldly career cannot but be blessed. Be he great or small, he will, thereby, ever keep his gaze fixed on the highest in life and thus realize himself.

Each one of us wants his daily bread and has to work for it. And there is nothing either wrong or ridiculous in asking God to give us our daily bread. Do we not, when we are really in need, go about begging it of those whom we regard as the great ones of this world? Then, why not bow down in humble prayer and beg it of Him who is the Master of them all?

But what a human being really needs is the bread of life, an ever-growing life in knowledge, wisdom, character, peace, hope and love. It is for these treasures of the spirit that we must pray constantly, continuously, and at regular hours. Co-operative power of thought is nowhere better shown than in all the members of a family, society or a church praying together and praying at some fixed hour. Let that hour be known to all the members of a particular body. Let each one retire into himself and pray at *that* hour. This kind of co-operation will bring mutual help and strength. It will forge a bond of union, sympathy, and love that will enable that body to work mightily for the cause it represents.

It will engender and develop a spirit of selflessness, of give and take, of mutual forgiveness, of hope, of service, of cohesion

and mutual guidance, that is so necessary for one and all to lead a truly useful life.

We fail because we do not know how to pray. We falter because we have not prayed regularly from day to day, and especially in moments of the greatest crises in our life. Our lives thus remain void of any real contents of joy. We are not true to our higher self. We do not try to know and unfold it. How can we then hope to be of service to others? Work without prayer can never become a blessing. It may lead to useless fretting, worry, haste and waste. Prayer alone is the staying power of all abiding work. Prayer is both static and dynamic.

The Test of Regeneration

It is often seen that thirsty souls strive for culture and progress in the spiritual world, but without any definite and clear object in view and without any ideal of what is true spiritual life. Such souls though sincerely seeking spiritual advancement, can make little progress.

What is the spot we desire to arrive at? What is the ideal state we desire to attain? Is happiness the desired goal we long to reach? Is well-doing our end and aim? Or should we rest contented if we can sit for some hours together in the contemplation of the Author of the Universe? No, these are not the true ends of life; though no doubt, we have to meet with these as means on the way of our progress. For the whole period of our earthly life we may be occupied with them, still they are far from being the ends of existence. It may seem a little puzzling to think that even praying and well-doing are not the objects of life. But a little reflection thereon will clear the point. We are not self-existent beings. God has created us and given us mental and physical powers which we should employ according to the will of the Author of our being. The end of all culture is to harmonise our will with that of God.

Often—very often, we labour under a very mistaken notion as to the true ideal of spiritual life, and consequently various forms of deception in prayer and worship and well-doing creep in. We often pray for things which our impulses lead us to seek. Often prayer and worship become routine work—cold and heartless, producing little change in our lives.

There is another form of deception, subtle and disguised, which hinders the growth of the inner life, and thus does serious harm. This form of deception creeps not only into private prayer but also into public worship. A person may feel edified by going to church, may join in the service with all his heart. On leaving church he says he has been highly benefitted. And yet he may be deceiving himself. By the aid of our imagination we often assume moods and feelings which are not ours. One may feel elevated by worship in the same superficial way, as by grand music, a splendid painting, or a noble statue. This state lasts only for a few minutes and produces no enduring effects.

It is not an unfrequent occurrence in life, that by the help of a strong imagination we conjure up images and feel ourselves elevated to the highest pitch. If our worship remains of this character, God's house becomes a place where instead of seeking conformity to the divine will, we seek only a form of spiritual gratification. Whenever we seek any other end than the will of God, we offend His Majesty in His very temple. The mere rousing of our feelings by conjuring up vivid images of heavenly things would not do us any real and permanent good. All the means of spiritual growth such as prayer, worship and well-doing, which we have recourse to, should be directed towards one end,—namely, the regeneration of our will. What is the test of real prayer? We often spend hours—nay days together, in devotional exercises with little benefit to our souls. When our daily devotions are over let us test ourselves and see whether our will has been influenced, whether we have formed new resolves of obedience and love. A devout soul places his whole self without reserve before the throne of God and says "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth."

All spiritual exercises should be devoted to the attainment of only one object—rooting out all evil propensities and harmonising our will with that of God. If we seek our personal sanctity as the end, the sense of it will only puff up our pride.

us, we are not regenerated, and all our prayers have been lost like a shower on the desert. Often the pleasure of conscious elevation fills our worship. We feel that we are in full enjoyment of God's grace. Even in this a man cannot entirely get rid of the desire of self-gratification. As earthly pleasure ties us to things of this world so the love of spiritual enjoyment hinders our progress and makes us like caged birds. Therefore we should always be on our guard that nothing short of the thorough regeneration of our will and entire obedience to the Divine will may satisfy us. Saints and sages all testify that God speaketh to our inmost souls if we wait upon Him to listen to His voice. Let us learn to wait upon Him and to obey Him.

—*I. M.*

God's Power of giving more

Do right, and God's recompense to you will be the power of doing more right. Give, and God's reward to you will be the spirit of giving more; a blessed spirit, for it is the spirit of God himself, whose Life is the blessedness of giving. Love, and God will pay you with the capacity of more love; for love is heaven—love is God within you.

—*T. W. Robertson.*

Reverence

Reverence is the chief joy and power of life—reverence for what is pure and bright in your youth, for what is true and tried in the age of others, for all that is gracious among the living, great among the dead, and marvellous in the power that cannot die.

—*Ruskin*

Taming the wild in man

Man is a tamer of wild beasts and these wild beasts are his passions. To draw their teeth and claws, to muzzle and tame them, to turn them into servants and domestic animals, fuming, perhaps, but submissive—in this consists personal education.

—*Amiel.*

Mercy

Mercies are love's messengers, sent from heaven to win our hearts to love again and entice us thither. That mercy that does

not increase or excite our love is abused and lost, as seed that is buried when it is sowed, and never more appeareth. —*R. Baxter.*

Work in the Living Present

Gather roses while they blossom; to-morrow is not to-day! Allow no moment to escape; to-morrow is not to-day. To-day is the opportunity for enjoyment and work. Knowest thou where thou wilt be to-morrow? Time flies swiftly away. Procrastination of a good deed has often brought repentance: to work while it is called to-day is my advice: time flies swiftly away. —*Gleim.*

True Spiritual Life

For want of a conception of true spiritual life, many thirsty souls wander hither and thither deluded by illusory ideals, which for the time being, beguile their fancy. For a time these restless spirits make vain efforts to obtain spiritual sustenance from a system which ultimately proves to them no better than a phantom. They again give up in disgust what they had been following as a vivid reality and once more plunge into the depths of worldliness. Therefore, it is of paramount importance for every hungry soul to have a clear conception of what constitutes true spiritual life before he sets to work for its attainment.

Before any attempt is made to define and to describe what it is, it will be convenient to indicate in a few words, what it is not. According to the popular notion, prayer, worship, ceremonies etc., are the essential elements which form the true spiritual life and wherever they exist, spiritual life also exists. But that is not always the case. These are means and effective means only when they are blessed by the spirit of God. Prayers or other outward observances of religion are no more the spiritual life than a spade or a watering pot forms the life of a tree.

In the opinion of some, true spiritual life consists in good work, in ceaseless activity for the good of others. That is also not true. Actions bear the same relation to our spiritual life as fruits to a living tree. They are external results of the internal spiritual life. None can be idle or inactive in whose heart spirit dwelleth. There is a class

of born workers, men and women, who by constitution and habit are always doing something. Their hands are always engaged in some or other useful work. Such a constitutionally active temperament never forms the spiritual life. To act in the true spirit, in obedience to the will of God, for His glory, and in utter forgetfulness of self, is the essential result of spiritual life.

In what then does spiritual life consist? It is more a matter of internal disposition than of external habit. A man may be active; he may often pray and commune with God, yet he may not have righteousness, peace and joy, which constitute the features of internal spiritual life.

There are three criteria by which true spiritual life may be tested. The first is entirely internal and no outsider can judge of it. It is a change in a man's inner disposition. His feelings take a new course, his will obeys a new rule of conduct and his mind thinks new thoughts; in short internally he becomes a new man.

The second test is visible to all. It is conduct guided by rules which are the above rules of ordinary human nature. A truly spiritual man is, properly speaking, a supernatural man. The word supernatural has a bad odour about it. By it we mean that something has happened which is contrary to the natural order, something like a rising of the sun in the West, of the raising of the dead. But we use the word supernatural here, in the sense that there is something in the disposition and conduct of a truly spiritual man, which is contrary to the usual conduct of ordinary man. When one injures another without any cause, it is natural to resent it. But to bear it meekly or to return good for evil, is something supernatural. We are all aware of the demands of our carnal nature. When a person by reason of spiritual strength rises above those demands, we justly regard him or her to be supernatural. When an ordinary man is revengeful the spiritual man is loving and friendly. Men in their ignorance have laid undue stress on merely physical and material miracles such as the curing of the sick or the raising of the dead.

The last and not the least test of the true spiritual life is the undivided desire to seek the glory of God in everything, at all times, and at all costs. A genuine spiritual life breathes a spirit of trustful obedience to the divine will. It is the salt of the life of a devout man. Pride, self-conceit, or self-sufficiency never influence him in

his moral or spiritual judgments. He knows only one thing, that is God; he knows one will, that the will of God. He knows only one work—to serve God and his children. Therefore we should aim at nothing less than the establishment of the kingdom of God within us, which is righteousness, peace and joy. —I. M.

Rao Bahadur Lalshankar Umiashankar Trivedi (1845—1912)

The cause of religious and social reform among Hindus and indeed all good and noble causes in Guzerat in particular, have lost a most devoted leader by the death of Rao Bahadur Lalshankar Umiashankar. What the saintly brothers Navalrai and Hiranand were to Sind, Lalshankar was to Guzerat—and not to Guzerat only. There are places in the Deccan where his name is still a household word and he is regarded as a “Dev Munisff” (a god of a Subordinate Judge) on account of the outstanding purity of his life and his devotion to the public good.

He was born in 1845 at Navdipur in the Baroda Territories. He belonged to the Visalnagar Brahmin caste. He studied in the Vernacular College at Ahmedabad and afterwards in 1865 he became Mathematical Teacher on Rs. twentyfive a month in the Ahmedabad High School. He was a self-educated man, for without attending any College, and after prosecuting his studies privately while employed as a teacher in the Ahmedabad High School, he passed in 1867 the First Arts Examination of the University of Madras. The reason was that in those days as now none could appear for the First Arts and B. A. degree examination of the University of Bombay without attending for a specified number of terms one of the Arts Colleges. Lalshankar was in 1869 appointed Assistant Teacher in the Guzerat Provincial College. In 1871 he became Registrar of the Small Causes Court at Ahmedabad.

All this promotion was due to Lalshankar's hard study, strict probity and capacity for organisation. But the turning point of his life was when, after he had passed the Subordinate Judge's examination in 1873, he was appointed by Government, Subordinate Judge at Pandharpur in 1874. Then and there in that place of pilgrimage began Lalshankar's activity for the public good, which to the end lasted as his natural habitude.



, R. B. Lalshankar Umiashankar

The famine which devastated the Deccan in 1877-79 was nowhere more destructive of human life and cattle than in the district of Sholapur. At that time Mr. Morarjee Goculdas was prominent in Bombay as a Mill Agent and his connection with the Sholapur Mill enabled him to realise the gravity of the situation in the district where people were dying for want of food in large numbers and whole villages were being laid bare of population. He started in Bombay a famine fund which did excellent work. He sent into the districts and villages men to report the situation to his Committee and to distribute food and money. At this time Lalshankar Umia-shankar was stationed at Pandharpur, as Subordinate Judge. He worked hard to alleviate the sufferings of the starving; but what appalled him most was the increasing number of children left fatherless and motherless. He saw that it would not do merely to save the starving; an Orphanage was the crying necessity of the day. Every Saturday evening, after his Court work, he used to leave for Bombay, arrive here on Sunday, go about among the "Shetias," represent to them the immediate necessity of establishing an Orphanage at Pandharpur, collect money, and leave Bombay for Pandharpur on Sunday night. It was on one of such occasions of his visit to Bombay that I was introduced to Lalshankar by the late Hon. Mr. Morarjee Goculdas. Said Mr. Morarjee to me; "Lalshanker has all the fire of Shanker. His enthusiasm and earnestness know no bounds. Where others spend time in talking and preaching against evil, he takes the evil in hand and fights it and enjoys the fight. And he succeeds!" And that was literally true. During the famine years I am writing of, Lalshankar got such hard-headed and orthodox men of the time as Chatturbhuj Morarjee and Khimjee Jeewa to subscribe largely to the Pandharpur Orphanage and Foundling Asylum. His energy, his quiet ways of persuasion, his humility, and, above all, his doggedness won wherever he went among the "Shetias" of Bombay, and with all the prejudice they had against him because he was a "Sudharak", a religious and social reformer, a prominent member of the Theistic Church known as the Prarthana Samaj, they helped him in the cause he had espoused. At Pandharpur he became known as a *Dev Munsiff*.

It will take long to recount the social and religious activities of Lalshankar during the period of his service as Subordinate Judge.

His name stands identified with a number of institutions. The widow Marriage Association, the Bala Vivaha Nishedhaka Mandali, the Guzerat Samsara Sudhara Samaj, the Vidhavasram, the Prarthana Samaj School, the Devabhai Kanyashala, the Antyaja School, the Mahipatram Rupram *Anathashram* and Founding Home, the Ladies Club, the Bholanath Institute, the Guzerat Vernacular Society, the Seva Sadan, the Anjuman Islam,—all these were his creations and they meant activity in educational, religious and social matters, without reference to caste or creed. He was Secretary of the Anjumani-Islam of Ahmedabad—the Mahomedans owned him as their own as did the Hindus.

Several lessons emerge from a life so devoted to good work. Lalshankar was always busy and found time for everything which appealed to his heart of reform. What he took in hand he did to the best of his power and did it thoroughly. Every day meant to him no respite but hours of toil in philanthropic work; and for that he spared neither time nor money of his own. Failure, difficulties, want of co-operation and help, apathy on all sides, large promises and poor performances from those around—these never soured his temper or daunted his heart; but he went on doing his part; ever smiling, cheerful and hopeful. Lalshankar was not a dreamer but a doer. The idealist and the realist—the man of thought and of action—combined in him. And so, he has gone to his rest! I have had the privilege of his company and his inspiring conversation many a time and every time I learnt what a soul of spiritual strength Lalshankar's was. That formed the root of his life and life-long activity. It was his piety—faith in God and His World—which inspired Lalshankar and gave zest to his manifold activities. His daily *bhajans* and prayers, his daily hours of meditation—from these he derived strength for his daily work. Prayer with him meant the outpouring of the heart to its God in the sweetness of solitude followed by action done, life led, duties discharged, services rendered to our fellows in harmony with God's will.

Yes it was his life of piety—his trust in God, his active faith, that made him what he was—a devoted worker, who lived for and loved his fellows and helped all good and noble causes. It is such men who teach us the lesson of true and enduring patriotism. They form the real capital and wealth of the country. —N. G. C.

A Well-Balanced Reasonable Mind

Reason is the special characteristic of man, and yet it is a rare thing to find really reasonable men, all the more that self-love hinders reason, and beguiles us insensibly into all manner of trifling, but yet dangerous acts of justice and untruth, which, like the little foxes in the Canticles, spoil our vines, while, just because they are trifling, people pay no attention to them, and because, they are numerous, they do infinite harm. Let me give some instances of what I mean.

We find fault with our neighbour very readily for a small matter, while we pass over great things in ourselves. We strive to sell dear and buy cheap. We are eager to deal out strict justice to others but to obtain indulgence for ourselves. We expect a good construction to be put on all we say, but we are sensitive and critical as to our neighbour's words. We expect him to let us have whatever we want for money, when it would be more reasonable to let him keep that which is his, if he desires to do so, and leave us to keep our gold. We are vexed with him because he will not accommodate us, while perhaps he has better reason to be vexed with us for wanting to disturb him. If we have a liking for any one particular thing, we despise all else, and reject whatever does not precisely suit our taste. If some inferior is unacceptable to us, or we have once caught him in error, he is sure to be wrong in our eyes whatever he may do, and we are for ever thwarting, or looking coldly on him, while, on the other hand, someone who happens to please us is sure to be right. Sometimes even parents show their unfair preference for a child endowed with personal gifts, over one afflicted with some physical imperfection. We put the rich before the poor, although we may have less claim, and be less worthy. We even give preference to well-dressed people. We are strict in exacting our own rights, but expect others to be yielding as to theirs; we complain freely of our neighbours, but we do not like them to make any complaints of us. Whatever we do for them appears very great in our sight, but what they do for us counts nothing. In a word, we are like the Paphlagonian partridge which has two hearts, for we have a very tender, pitiful, easy heart towards ourselves, and one which is hard, harsh, and strict towards our neighbour. We have two scales, one wherein to measure our own goods to the best

advantage, and the other to weigh our neighbour's - to the worst. Holy Scripture tells us that lying lips are an abomination unto the Lord, and the double heart, with one measure whereby to receive, and another to give, is also abominable in His sight.

Be just and fair in all you do. Always put yourself in your neighbour's place, and put him into yours, and then you will judge fairly. Sell as you would buy, and buy as you would sell, and your buying and selling will alike be honest. These little acts of dishonesty seem unimportant, because we are not obliged to make restitution, and we have, after all, only taken that which we might demand according to the strict letter of the law, but, nevertheless they are sins against right and charity, and are mere trickery, greatly needing correction, nor does any one lose by being generous, noble-hearted, and courteous. Be sure then often to examine your dealings with your neighbour, whether your heart is right towards him, as you would have his towards you, were things reversed. This is the true test of reason.

Perseverance in Spiritual Life

The necessity of labour and perseverance is acknowledged in every department of life. As a rule, there is no success possible without steady labour. Nothing great can be achieved without perseverance. Rome was not built in a day. The Pyramids of Egypt took long years to raise their heads so high. 'Little by little' is the secret of success. Little by little did the corals of the Pacific build the islands known after their name. Little by little does the student accumulate his stock of knowledge. Little by little does the feeble mountain stream gather strength and swell into the rushing river or the roaring cataract. The world does not abound so much in men of genius as in steady workers. Even genius without patient labour can leave no permanent footprint behind it. Moderate powers with steady labour can achieve more in the long run than high but rusting talent. Nay, many men of genius themselves have defined genius as nothing more than a capacity for patient labour.

It is beside our purpose to stop to discuss whether there is such a thing as a natural genius or not, and we may well dismiss the

subject, simply remarking that great achievements generally owe their success more to patient labour than to great talent. What can be a higher achievement than spiritual progress? What is more difficult to attain to? What object is of more importance to our life? Yet, a glance at our conduct is sufficient to shew that we do not really consider it to be difficult of attainment. We do not seem to believe that it requires any great amount of labour. At least our practice belies our profession in this respect. Most of us resort to no other means except the daily worship. And with many even this has become a mere stereotyped form. To go to bed a pauper at night and leave it a millionaire in the morning, may sometimes happen in the course of our social existence, but no such sudden change in intellectual or spiritual life is possible.

True, we hear of sudden conversion of sinners into saints. But what is the real meaning of such conversion? It does not mean that he who was the most degraded of men the moment before, at once becomes equal to a saint. It simply means that he who was so long rushing headlong into a downward course, suddenly hears some voice within and turns his back toward sin and strikes a new path in the opposite direction. The conversion is only the beginning of his spiritual existence. It will take a long struggle, extending, it may be, over years, before he attains the position of a saint.

Success in every thing presupposes earnest labour, persevering effort. No expenditure of energy, no work. This is as true in the spiritual world as in the physical. This is the Universal law of nature. Is our spiritual life beyond the pale of nature, that it should be exempt from this Universal law? —I. M.

The Teaching Of The Pulpit

The teaching of the pulpit tends rather to the formation of active, useful and unselfish lives; to a clearer insight into the great masses of remediable suffering and need that are still in the world; to the duty of carrying into all the walks of secular life a nobler and more unselfish spirit; to a habit of judging men and churches mainly by their fruits and very little by their beliefs. —W. E. Lecky.

Martyrdom

Martyrdom is never barren ; martyrdom for a great idea is the highest formula the human *Ego* can reach in the accomplishment of a mission ; and when a just man rises in the midst of his prostrate fellows, and proclaims, *This is the truth, and I in dying worship this*, a spirit of new life is diffused over all humanity, because each man reads upon the brow of the martyr a line of his own duty, and learns how great is the power given by God to his creature for its fulfilment.

—*Mazzini*.

The Eternal Thirst

There is a class of men who regard culture as the supreme end of life, and understand by the word 'culture' the attainment of the various kinds of knowledge comprised in the word 'learning'. They suppose that truth can be known only by a systematic study of arts and sciences, history and philosophy, mathematics and literature. In short, books in their opinion, are the primary source of culture. Anything apprehended by spiritual vision, by deep meditation or by self-forgetful love and service to man is to them merely the poetic vision of an imaginative soul. Logical consistencies and scientific methods of experiment and observations are their infallible scriptures. The experiences gained by constant prayer and meditation, the insight won by direct communion with the Deity are regarded by them as hallucinations. These men want to subdue the world by books, and they will live by books and for books alone. They will never be prepared to believe that the original source of wisdom is the human soul when enlightened by communion with God. A vision in the soul is worth more than the study of many systems of knowledge. A man may spend his whole life in studying numerous books on different subjects without getting any insight into the truth, which cannot be known so long as the source of inspiration remains untouched. A man who takes his views of things from the accumulated experiences of the past, takes them upon trust from others ; but he that cultivates his soul by prayer and meditation, laying aside all that he has learnt from books, traditions and men, draws wisdom fresh from the original and pure sources of inspiration within himself. The deeper he dives into his soul, the more does he find the way straight and clear.

The culture of the intellect and æsthetics may be practically accomplished by the study of books but culture in its wider sense transcends the artificial methods of the understandig. Moral and spiritual truths must be arrived at in a different way. The Divinity in man cannot reveal itself unless he holds his desires in check, conquers his lower self, follows the dictates of faith, and obeys the moral law written in his heart. But this is no easy affair. The first thing necessary for a man to enter the reign of spiritual truths is purity. Purity is surely the entrance to the kingdom of heaven. Without it the culture of the soul is not only futile, but simply impossible. But the purity which leads to heaven does not mean a negative virtue. It does not mean abstinence from untruth, base and servile ends, but it means a positive hankering after and pursuit of righteousness. It means an eternal thirst for the beauty of God, the beauty that awakens the deepest love, without which there can be no rest for the human soul. This thirst is never quenched, this longing never ceases. Yet a touch of it works many a wonder, opens many a new stream of light, beauty and self-sacrifice.

Why do we Exist ?

We exist for the sake of spreading light and love and hope and cheer that we believe in all over the country. That is what we are for,—not to go to Church if we happen to like the Minister, not to go to Church if it happens to be a pleasant Sunday morning.

—*Dr. M. G. Savage.*

The Gospel of the Brahmo Samaj

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand"

Romans XIII. 12.

We believe that the night is far spent, the day is at hand. But they say the work of the Brahmo Samaj is finished. People are often heard to say that there is no more work for the Brahmo Samaj. Can that really be the case? Can you believe, my friends, that we have no more work to do? For my own part I believe that the night is far spent and the day is at hand. How is it then that our neighbours

say that the sun has set, and darkness is coming? How is it, then, that they advise us to wind up our business and resign ourselves to the hand of sleep? I believe there must be some misunderstanding between them and us as to the nature of our work,—as to the Gospel of the Brahmo Samaj. It will therefore be well to consider what is the Gospel of the Brahmo Samaj, what is the message which the Brahmo Samaj has brought for India and for the world at large; and thence to decide whether really the message of the Brahmo Samaj has become effete.

If we ask those who tell us that the Brahmo Samaj has lived out its term of existence, to give out their reasons for thinking so, I am afraid they can hardly give us any definite reply. I have heard some say that the mission of the Brahmo Samaj was to stop the *progress* of Christianisation of India. About the middle of the last century many well-educated Hindus, being dissatisfied with popular Hinduism, were adopting Christianity as an alternative religion. And then the Brahmo Samaj stepped in and stemmed that tide of Christian usurpation. But, they say, the state of things has changed much since then, and now there is no need for the existence of the Brahmo Samaj.

I hardly think there will be any need for discussing the issue raised here; for we tell them at the outset that, that is not the mission of the Brahmo Samaj. The Brahmo Samaj was not a stop-gap or patch-work. The message of the Brahmo Samaj springs from the deeper needs of the human soul. The Brahmo Samaj has come to existence because, neither Hinduism nor Christianity nor any of the older religions succeeded in satisfying the cravings and questioning of the human heart and human understanding of the present age. It was because they were found wanting that people turned to the New Gospel.

Then again it is well to guard against another possible, and I am afraid, to some extent common mistake. The Gospel of the Brahmo Samaj is not destructive. The Brahmo Samaj has had to destroy much no doubt, but it destroys not for destruction; its object is construction and whatever destructive work it has had to do, is for the further object of constructing something better, higher and nobler in its place. The Brahmo Samaj may say "I have come not to destroy, but to build up." We say emphatically, the mission of the

Brahmo Samaj is not destruction, but construction. The Brahmo Samaj says to the world: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, the *shastras* and scriptures, the *gurus* and teachers, I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Was there ever a religion, I ask, was there ever a religion more essentially preservative in its aim and aspirations? The Brahmo Samaj seeks the treasure of wisdom and spirituality from all the nooks and corners of the world and combines them into one harmonious perfect progressive scripture. Truth and the whole truth, truth and truth alone, that is the scripture of the Brahmo Samaj. And in the pursuit of truth the Brahmo Samaj knows no boundary of caste or colour or nationality. We say truth is not of the East nor of the West alone, truth is not of the Hindus nor of the Jews, but truth is God's and truth is humanity's. And do you call this destructive? The Brahmo Samaj destroys? Who then discovered the accumulated priceless treasure of the deep religious knowledge of the Hindu rishis that was mouldering amidst the moth-heaten palm leaf manuscripts and brought them to the hands of the man of the street and the woman of the *seclusion*? Who revived the study of the Upanishads and the Gita when there was either thick, deep darkness or saucy impertinent shallow learning brooding over the country? It was Raja Ram Mohan Roy, and following in his footsteps it was the Brahmo Samaj. Who gave a new dignity to the *Sankirtana* of Chaitanya that used to have been looked down with scorn and contempt even till the middle of the last century? Who familiarised the life and teachings of Jesus to the educated people of the country? I say the Brahmo Samaj more than the Christian missionaries, has contributed to the spread in this country of what is truest and best in the Christian ideal. Similarly the study and appreciation and assimilation of Mahomedanism, Buddhism, Vaisnavism, Sikhism and Suphism were inaugurated by the Brahmo Samaj. The Brahmo Samaj venerates, cherishes, loves, calls it own the scriptures of all;—for we are not a sect of a nation, we call ourselves the church of God. Who truly revere the Vedas—those who keep it folded in sacred cloth and garland of roses but never read it or those who hold it open before men and women and ask them to drink deep of its life-giving spirit? Who are the true lovers of Christ—those

who call him Lord, Lord, and do not do his will or those who in love and humility try to walk in the light of his teachings and his example ! Verily, verily I say if we be true Brahmos, if we be the faithful descendants of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, if we are born in his spirit, we shall not let one jot or tittle of truth and knowledge that God vouchsafed to His children in any age or any land, pass away till all be fulfilled. That is the mission of Brahmoism—that is the Gospel of the Brahmo Samaj—the acceptance and proclamation of Truth irrespective of its place or time of birth as the one self-sufficient scripture. And whatever is not truth, whatever is opposed to reason and conscience even though it be very dear unto us, even though it has the most sacred associations, we reject it,—for the scripture is for truth and not truth for the scripture. The truth and the whole truth and nothing but the truth—that is Brahmoism, that is the Gospel of the Brahmo Samaj. And because the Brahmo Samaj has pledged itself to truth alone, it has nothing to fear from any new discovery either of science or of history. The Brahmo Samaj welcomes every new light. Every new discovery develops and strengthens its gospel. It alone can consistently without scruple or misgiving say—"Light, more Light."

They say the Brahmo Samaj does not believe in revelation. It is only natural Religion. Do we not believe in revelation ? It is either greatest ignorance or most wilful mis-representation that can say that we do not believe in revelation. The Brahmo Samaj believes in an ever-present, ever-near, self-revealing God. The Revelation of the Brahmo Samaj was not in the past, nor on the top of Mount Sinai alone ! God is continually revealing himself to the simple in mind and pure in heart. His revelation was not a bygone historical incident, but it is a living fact of the present—a natural normal process in the divine scheme of the universe. Revelation comes to us not as something unnatural, an extra-mundane anomaly; it comes as naturally into the pure heart as the dew descends on the soft grassy velvet of the fields. In God's universe there is nothing unnatural; we are not ashamed to call our religion natural; for natural is revealed and revealed is natural. In our theology there is no antagonism between God and Nature. The Brahmo Samaj feels the presence of God everywhere, the lovely azure of the morning sky, the awe-inspiring sublimity of the mountain peak, the howling

waves of the unfathomable ocean, the gentle rippling of the inland stream, the unspotted white of the lily, the variegated colour of the bird's feather as much reveal the silent presence of God as the rise and fall of religions, the impassioned preachings of prophets and the self-forgetful faith of martyrs. Not a sparrow falleth here without God. The Brahmo Samaj does not raise a barrier between the natural and the revealed, between the sacred and secular. We will not secularise religion but will spiritualise the world. We do not deny the inspiration of Moses or Jesus or Chaitanya, but fully recognising their revelation we say that God has not ceased to reveal himself since then—ours is not a God of the first century—our God is the ever-revealing God of time and of eternity. The light of reason and the voice of conscience come from him. Wherever loyal hearts have sought truth in sincerity of purpose, wherever brave spirits have patiently borne the storms of life in resignation to the law of duty, wherever there is honest striving, noble sacrifice, disinterested love and uncomplaining service we recognise the spirit of God working in man. The Brahmo Samaj believes in an endless, timeless, continuous, revelation learnt not from the pages of dead books, not as an ecclesiastical dogma, but as a present living fact of the human heart and human experience. For us every spot is hallowed, every moment of life is sacred, every work is service and every event of life is divine dispensation. That is the Gospel of the Brahmo Samaj.

They say we have no prophets, we have no religious teachers, we are lacking in personal relationship. But do we not revere Christ, do we not have personal relationship with him, because we love and venerate and sit at the feet of Buddha? Must we hate Mahommed in order that we may love Chaitanya? The Brahmo Samaj knows no such narrowness. The Brahmo Samaj teaches us to see the spirit of God in all the religious teachers of the world. We do not call them Gods,—they themselves would not like us to give them the worship that is due to their God and our God. But the Brahmo Samaj gratefully acknowledges humanity's debt to the sages and saints of all countries, honours, reveres and loves them. The religion of the Brahmo Samaj is the religion of peace and concord. It says, let there be no more discord and division among the children of God—for there is but one God, one Church, one

sacred bond of brotherhood. Between man and man there is no barrier and can be no barrier ; they are all children of one Father. All old feuds between man and man, between nations and nations, sects and sects, between religion and science, between the priest and the layman, between God and the world may cease now. Brahmoism sees in the universe, one grand harmony,—science is but the hand-maiden of religion, and theology but the crown of all sciences ; nations are but the different members of one family, and all the varying, vanishing creeds but the stepping-stones to the throne of God on high, the halting places in the eternal journey of man in the quest of Infinite God.

—H. C. S.

Freedom and Reverence

There is no freedom like the freedom of humility and no privilege like the privilege of reverence.

Heroism in Religion

All true and heartfelt religion, speaking to men as it does of life higher than they have actually attained to, and laying down a law which they imperfectly obey, demands self-denial as the first condition of its promises, and from the outset provokes a contest with all low desires. It therefore puts the mind in training for strong resistance to outward influences which imperil the sacred interests of truth and right and enables the soul to be true to its convictions in some moment of historic crisis. The world is greatly indebted to men whose heroic courage has been trained and strengthened by the discipline of a religious life. The scholarly Erasmus had not found in his study the strength to take by the throat the giant evils of his time which the Monk Luther acquired from his life in the cloister.

The records of all religion, ancient and modern, abound in noble instances of courage and sacrifice ; and, while it is too much to claim that religion is the author of traits which belong more or less to all human nature, yet there can be no doubt that the discipline of the religious life has given power to these heroic qualities. The men and women who have taken their religion seriously, and have tried to live

by its law for the sake of its religious rewards, have been put in training for right use of those exceptional opportunities when heroism may turn the tide in the life of a people.

So true is this that the spirit of religion is never long content without some kind of dragon to fight whereon it may prove its valour. It is often remarked how surely an age of persecution has been followed by an age of controversy in the history of the Church. One reason probably is that long battle with a monstrous tyranny has generated a fighting capacity which in succeeding times of comparative peace, turns upon the smaller sins and errors that brethren are able to find in one another's lives. This tendency like any blind impulse, sometimes leads to absurd results. The good woman who thought that the anti-vaccination Society was a direct heir and successor of the great and glorious anti-slavery cause was the type of a class of people who have led religion into many false positions.

To such an extreme may this be carried that people actually persuade themselves, not only that it is better to fight, but that it is better to suffer defeat than to win victory. The one kind of heroism that they seem able to appreciate is that which nails its colours to the mast, and then goes down with the ship. When the ship does not sink, but obstinately remains afloat, they are almost ready to scuttle her to make her sink, so fain are they to carry their sacrifice to the highest pitch of martyrdom. Open success, they are apt to assume, necessarily implies cowardice, or insincerity; and one cannot be a prophet in their eyes, of either high or low degree, unless he is fortunate enough to get himself stoned.

All this, of course, sounds somewhat foolish. And yet it all testifies strongly to the instinctive spirit of religion to seek the heroic attitude. Ease and complacency do not belong of right to that energetic reforming conscience which must work for the kingdom of heaven against every consideration of selfishness or expediency that holds it back. It is right that men should not be content with an easy-going religion, but should demand of it that it shows its capacity to suffer for the truth which it professes to hold dear.

There is no lack of opportunity for this, even without tilting at windmills or stirring up needless strife. No person can be true to his highest convictions, except at some considerable cost; and in

quiet ways there is probably a deal more of heroism in the world than is commonly supposed. We talk much of the cowardice of those who dare not speak their honest thought with regard to religious truth. But on the other hand, it is fair to say that amid the changes of the time there are thousands who do accept no small measure of ignominy and sorrow as the price of a clearer light. Should we wonder that so few are able to face this trial, or, rather that there are so many who have in them something of the stuff from which martyrs are made?

Meanwhile, the smaller crosses of life are sometimes harder to bear than the great ones. After a time it becomes as difficult to march with a pea in one's shoe as to face a hostile army. Time was when Unitarians were virtually outlaws in the Church. That time is rapidly passing away. But it was perhaps as easy to stand up under the active persecution of those days as to bear with dignity a certain supercilious disdain which one class of Christians is wont to manifest towards its neighbours. Such bigotry, of course betokens a narrow mind, and ought to be pitied or laughed at rather than feared. But none the less, it is often a most aggravating infliction.

Now there is no use in going far afield to seek adventures for the religious spirit, unless it has learnt how to bear nobly these smaller sacrifices that come in its way. The common proverb would read more truly if it said, "No man can be a hero unless he is a hero to his valet." The greater must include the less, and it can be safely assumed that capacity to bear the wrongs and woes of a nation was never shown by one who did not know how to be patient with household trials. Look out for the peace in which this treasure of a heroic spirit is gathered up, and the great adventures will take care of themselves.

Alas that there should be the other side of this thought which we must not shrink from applying to ourselves and our fellowmen! Religion is essentially heroic, demands to be put to the test of endurance, and feeds upon the sacrifices it must make. There is no religion worthy the name where nothing is undertaken or suffered for its sake. If we are to judge the tree by its fruits, how small as yet is the vitality of faith among many who make loudest claims to its possession!

—*The Christian Register.*

Workers with God

Workers together with God! Such an inspiring and glorious faith as this, what wonder it does! How could it do otherwise than to make of all the children of men who have heard its voice, glad, earnest, brave, self-forgetting, consecrated to all noble service of God and humanity!

Is there for us all, an Infinite Power, who alike in storm and sunshine, in light and darkness, where we can see and where we cannot see, is working out His great and eternal purposes of good? And may we make our poor small lives, lives of working together with Him—supplementing our weakness with His strength! Even so; which is as the ivy, weakest of plants, grows strong and glorious by laying hold of the great tower by its side, by whose strength it lifts itself into the sunlight, so may we, frail children of earth, lay hold of the hand of Infinite Power above us, and putting our lives with him lift ourselves up into strength, into courage, into joy and peace, into patience, into certainty of success, into hope shining with a light that is more than of earth.

Workers together with God! Oh, high thought! Let us take it to our hearts together more deeply than we have ever done. Let us catch the inspiration of its lofty meaning from Paul and Jesus, and every other great hero of faith, past and present.

Let us make it the key-note of our lives, not alone in religion, but in all things.

So shall we have courage, hope, fidelity, strength. So shall our lives become ever more anthems, glad, solemn, sweet, making "music for the gladness of the world."

—J. T. S.

All's Right with the World

"God's in his heaven,
All's right with the world."

—*Browning.*

Why is it that we do not at once see that God is good? Why is it that ever we ask the question whether things in the large are right or not? It must either be because the power of vision is limited, and we see things partially and not wholly, or else because our vision is clouded over.

The brevity of life is, of course, a first hindrance to our comprehension of the divine economy. We do not live long enough here in this world to see and know things as they really are. Time enough is not allotted us to search through the heights and depths of the providences. It is but a glimpse we get a partial, transient, unsatisfying glimpse of the vast purposes, that are developing in the visible universe, and in our marvellous existence in it. We must consider also that the means we have at hand for discovering the ways of the spirit are meagre and imperfect. Thought rising on loftiest opinion cannot mount so high. Reason with all the majesty of its powers, cannot explore and take in, the complex and shifting order. And our experience though it covers such wide and varied range of phenomena, teaches us, but the alphabet of the divine economy.

We are in the case of the astronomers. They have to-day the most powerful instruments of observation. They turn them to the heavens ; and what do they find ? Not by any means that they can enclose in their tiny glass, the whole glittering universe. On the contrary, they find that it extends infinitely beyond the reach of their small instruments of discovery, and that its contents multiply in bewildering magnitude and profusion, that the stars are as many as the grains of sand of which the earth is composed.

It is the same with their mathematics. The mathematics of the astronomer are so marvellously elaborated that only the clearest intellects can understand and use them ; and, though they have yielded the most amazing results, the complexity of the celestial laws still baffles and confuses.

We are in the same case in respect to the spiritual universe. We have no means of penetrating it or enclosing it, so but that it grows upon us more and more, and involves us in greater and yet greater bewilderment.

Nor is that all. We cannot see things as we expect on account of the cloudiness of the medium through which we look. We believe there are but a half dozen nights or so in a year when the astronomer has perfectly clear and unobstructed field of observation. When we should say the atmosphere is perfectly clear, he tells us that there is a haze, invisible to the naked eye, obscuring the stars, and that there are few days when there are not fogs and smokes and minute dust to prevent observation.

So it is with our fine instruments of spiritual observation with the imagination, with the reason. There are occasions when we cannot use them if we would, and are obliged to sit in the fog and smoke and confusions of the world, and wait. Sometimes we must wait until tired of waiting, and we begin to complain that it is impossible to get any observation at all. Alas! How often we are bidden to give up life without even having had the one coveted observation we had hoped for!

Physical troubles, like a cloud, intercept our vision of the goodness of God. So do mental troubles. Besides our dispositions often throw up such exhalations of misery, and the winds of ill-fortune blow so much dust in our eyes, that it is only in a dim and confused way that we can see and feel that "God's in his heaven."

But because our instruments are feeble and we have to make our observations with much difficulty, and fail to discover what we wish, we must not conclude that God's *not* in His heaven. That, at least, is not the way of astronomers. Though they cannot bring the universe within their telescopes and mathematics, they have discovered enough to assure them that it is a cosmos. They have found that its beautiful structures are obedient to eternally perfect laws. He is the universe, say they; and what there is within our reach is good and beautiful. So far as we can see, we find perfections everywhere. The farther we get, the more the perfections multiply. In truth, the imperfections resolve themselves gradually into perfections.

So, whether, we understand God entirely or not, we may understand him somewhat. We may understand him at least to such extent that our hearts may be thrilled with love and rapture over his works and ways with us. That we do not understand him wholly makes no difference. We see enough to know that he is good.

Another consideration that helps us to see and feel that "God's in his heaven" is the everlasting life and the endless development of nature. The great law of evolution, which knowledge has so completely established and so beautifully set forth, tells us how things go on spiritually as well as physically; and we should be most unwilling to go back to the ancient ideas of the divine economy.

If once we were satisfied with the idea that the world was created in a day, that man was originally perfect, but lost his divinity by a catastrophe, and that it was only by a miracle that he can recover it; or imagined that man was a plaything in the hands of two great powers, God and Satan, who tossed him about, now tenderly, now mercilessly, as a cat plays with a mouse; or once thought of existence as a circle, the serpent with its tail in its mouth the emblem of it,—thought of all things and creatures as returning endlessly into themselves,—how much more stimulative to the imagination is the idea of a living principle manifesting itself in an ascending series of cosmical and spiritual forms; the mind of man growing with all other things; the truth coming more and more; love and beauty appearing and re-appearing in a succession of spring-times; all things above and below within the sweep and compass of Holy Reason and Holy Love; we ourselves within the sweep having our freedom within our spheres and doing what we can,—though it be with much suffering and wrong-doing, yet what we can, and doing it under the energizing and fructifying impulses of infinite life that works within the soul as it works within the body, pushing on all its powers and functions, at the same time it endows its developing forms with every grace and power.

Now, if you are sure of beauty and goodness in the world around you, you must be sure of the beauty and the goodness of God as its principle of development. If you are sure of the majesty and sanctity of your own soul, you must be sure of the majesty and the holiness of God, the root and stem and flower of your being.

And so the evil that in moods of desperation we complain of and erect into a power co-equal with God, because it makes life the scene of painful struggle, we construe as a transient condition of the universal expansion and development. Were there no decaying, there were no growing; no lapses from duty, there were no regenerations; no violations of law and no failures of love, there were nothing to do. No longer would this be a living world. The soul would have no existence. Evolution of life-forms, of thought-forms, or character-forms, would altogether cease. We are living in a partially made world; God is still working at it; we are his workmen; he is carrying out his ideas through us; from him we get our daily wages and profit. Nor can we work without much loss

and suffering, without much seeming unreward; for what we do we cannot always see our money. We are in that undeveloped state where we make mistakes, do ourselves wrong, and do others wrong. We have feeble perception imperfectly developed minds, weak wills, and often times are unaccountable for our conduct. Still, God is working in us; he is the conscience in us; he is the heart in us that loves what is right and good; he is the power in us by which we are trying to rectify our lives.

Even death we cannot think of as extinguishing the light that is in us, because we cannot conceive of such love and reason as dwell within the human breast except as of eternal continuance, and as re-habilitating themselves for new service in a realm of spiritual activities of whose range and duration we can form not even the dimmest idea. Hence we say that "God's in his heaven, and All's right with the world."

Another thing that helps us to see and feel it, is the constant cumulation of knowledge, the constant increase of spiritual forces. We are most certainly making spiritual gains. Notwithstanding there are enough to say they cannot see where virtue gains in the long run, we must still adhere to our assertion.

Are we not in the habit of estimating spiritual gains and losses by material standards? And do we not thus sometimes err in our reckoning? For example, if I have expended a given quantity of physical strength in hammering out a piece of iron or in adding up a hundred columns of figures, physically I am by such measure exhausted. But, if I have expended a given amount of moral energy in an act of heroism or charity or patient devotion, I have not by so much diminished the moral force of my being. On the contrary, I have increased it; I have doubled it; it may be that I have trebled or quadrupled it. No one knows how much I have increased it. But it is certain that I have given it an incalculable increment.

—*The Unitarian.*

Worship

Worship is simply the contracted form of worth-ship. Worship is understanding the worth of the object that you make the object of your worship. All worship is based on understanding, and the fuller,

the profounder, the more loving your understanding, of the object of your worship the more true and living your worship becomes. There is no serious worship that is not based on understanding. The man who blindly falls before his God, that man has not entered even into the region of worship, for he does not understand the worth of the object he worships. The more we understand the object of our worship, the more fully we enter into the thing worshipped. "God", says a thinker, "is the highest object of human thought. The highest thought that your mind and heart has been able to reach, that is your God." The synthesis of all your experience, all that you have seen, read and thought and heard, that synthesis is religion, and the object of religion is the highest that you can conceive of, to which you give the name of God.

God our only Refuge

A story is told of an English woman of piety and wealth who one night as she was about to retire to her room saw distinctly the head of a man just under the bed. At a glance she took in the situation. She quietly closed and locked the door, as she was in the habit of doing, then leisurely brushed her hair and put on her dressing gown. She then took her Bible and read from it a portion which specially referred to God's watchful care over those who trust in Him. Having done this she knelt down and prayed aloud commending herself to the Almighty's protection, and imploring His mercy on those who through temptation and evil associations are led into sin and misery. She prayed God to change the heart of the evil-doers and to lead them to see and understand the beauty of believing in Him as their father and friend. Then arising from her knees she quietly put out the candle and went to bed. After a few moments, the man came out from his concealment and begged her not to be alarmed. He told her that he had come there to rob her but after the words read by her and the touching prayer uttered he could not make up his mind to carry out his intention. With the lady's permission, he then went to the window and gave a signal to his companions who were in the neighbourhood to depart, and coming back to her side he said, "Now I am going. Your prayer will be answered and no disaster will befall you." As he departed he took with him the book from which the lady had

read and it need hardly be added that it was most willingly given. This is a true story and is an instance of how truth is sometimes stranger than fiction. This illustrates how when all is dark despair the Almighty Father is ready to protect us. Incidentally, it also helps us to realise the power of prayer. Such miraculous rescues as that of this lady and equally miraculous conversion of the heart as that of the thief may not and do not happen in all cases, but these only serve to show the wonderful height to which the soul of even the worst hardened criminal can ascend if approached in the right spirit. This is how souls are won.

Wisdom Tabloids (5)

Daily ought we to renew our purposes, and to stir up ourselves to greater fervour, as though this were the first day of our conversion, and to say,

“Help me, my God! in this my good purpose, and in Thy holy service; and grant that I may now this day begin perfectly; for that which I have done hitherto is as nothing.”

II If thou cannot continuously recollect thyself, yet do it sometimes, at the least, once a day, namely, in the morning and at night.

In the morning fix thy good purpose; and at night examine thyself what thou hast done, how thou hast behaved thyself in word, deed, and thought; for in these perhaps thou hast oftentimes offended both God and thy neighbour.

Gird up thy loins like a man against the vile assaults of the devil; bridle thy riotous appetite, and thou shalt be the better able to keep under, all the unruly motions of the flesh.

Never be entirely idle; but either be reading, or writing, or praying, meditating, or endeavouring something for the public good.

III As for bodily austerities they must be used with discretion, neither are they to be practised by all men alike.

Those austerities which are not common are not to be exposed to public view; for things private are practised more safely at home.

—*Thomas A. Kempis.*

Courage and Faith

Is it necessary to warn ourselves that courage of the high type that wins our approval has no kinship with mere bravado? The great courage we love is not the offspring of casual impulse; it arises from deep conviction, and it is founded on firm-heartedness; it is reliable, enduring, constant—whichever way the wind of passing opinion may blow. It is fidelity to conscience and it is founded on the Rock of Truth.

Courage does not require a man to rush headlong against all who differ from him; not to be perpetually arguing and debating. Silent faithfulness to the highest ideals is often needed; and with it we should combine cheerful confidence in God and in everything that is good—wherever we may find it—in those from whom we differ most, as well as in those who may see almost eye to eye with us.

But what a help a joyous public service may be we all of us gladly know. Cannot many of us have a little evening service in our own homes now and then, and have the children with us? Perhaps likeminded neighbours would meet with us; we could sing and read together, and pray and strive to comfort one another. You remember that in New Testament times they spoke of the church in the house of Chloe, or Stephanas. That correctly described what obtained at that day. Those early gatherings for the worship of the unseen God were but tiny congregations of friends, meeting in the private houses of a few earnest friends. There were no priests or ministers; they read and sang and prayed together, and then went their way strengthened for the lives they had to live. Nero knew nothing of, or cared little for, the reformers of that age; but their lives were sweetened by their hour of worship, and they were happier in their unknown homes than was Nero in his marble palaces. Let us worship often with others if we can; alone, if we must.

For what is worship but thinking of the Highest and the best, and tuning our lives to that Diviner Harmony for which we sigh and struggle and pray?

Should there be any here who do not believe in God, I would say, "Be of good courage," for if your own heart fail you, what else have you got to rely on? But if you *do* believe in God, trust Him courageously, because you can never trust Him too much! Think

courageously ! Speak courageously ! Live courageously ! Be afraid of nothing (except being faithless to your highest ideal). Then, fearing naught, will ye be of good courage ; and He will strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.

The Prophets of the World

Man, mortal man, with all his frailties and short-comings, is deified and worshipped ; and to him is rendered that supreme adoration which belongs to God alone ! This idolatrous bending of the knee before man is an insult to Heaven, and an audacious violation of that entire loyalty and allegiance to God, which is demanded of every true believer. Like every other form of idolatry, it is a treason against God, which pollutes the heart and degrades the soul. On the other hand, equally mischievous, if not equally sacrilegious, is the rancour with which every prophet is hated and cursed by the followers of another prophet. Every religious sect shuts up truth, inspiration and holiness in its own narrow Church, and looks upon the life and labours of its prophets as the only saving dispensation of Providence ; while all prophets and truths that lie beyond its church are condemned as impostors and liars. This is making God, the God of a clan, a country and an epoch, instead of, as He is, the God of all mankind, of all space, and of all time. All true believers, acknowledge the Supreme Creator of the universe as the sole object of adoration and worship ; and as He is eternal and omnipresent and His Providence universal, they treat with reverence and gratitude the various dispensations of His Grace made at different times, and in different countries, for the benefit of mankind. They see Him revealed throughout the length and breadth of animate and inanimate creation ; they behold his general Providence in all the ordinary events and phenomena of nature's economy ; while His special Providence they devoutly trace in those special dispensations, which He from time to time makes through His prophets to save all nations from error and iniquity. The lives of all such prophets are accepted reverently as God's revelation in History, various and different they may be in their peculiar features and local adaptations, yet as regards the universal and eternal principles they represent, they are parts of the same divine economy, and subserve, more or

less, in the hands of God, the same grand purposes of revelation and redemption. Each of the prophets came into the world as a messenger of God, bearing a distinct message of glad tidings which he contributed to the cause of religious enlightenment and progress. We must then freely honour all of them, and gratefully accept from each what he has to deliver, instead of binding ourselves as slaves to any particular person as the only chosen prophet of God. For "At sundry times and in divers manners God spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets."

Let sectarianism perish. Let denominational and geographical boundaries be for ever forgotten, and let all nations unite in celebrating a universal festival in honour of all prophets regarding them as the Elder Brothers of the human race.

The Secret of Long Life

Lord Avebury wrote:—"I believe the secret of health is to eat little, drink little, be as much in the open air as possible, keep the mind from anxiety and the conscience from remorse." Mr. Frederic Harrison, who has long since passed his three-score years and ten, lays down these rules:—"Touch not tobacco, spirit, nor any unclean thing; rise from every meal with an appetite; walk daily two hours; sleep nightly seven hours: reverence all to whom reverence is due; be content with what you have." Mr. Justin M'Carthy said:—"The best way to grow old is, according to my experience, to keep up steady and regular work, have as much open air and physical exercise as possible, and think as little as may be about the advance of years." The Master of Charterhouse, Dr. Haig Brown, who was eighty-one, in reply to the queries sent him, forwarded the following lines:—

"A diet temperate and spare,
Freedom from base financial care,
Abundant work, a little leisure,
Pursuit of duty not of pleasure,
An even and contented mind,
In charity with all mankind,

Some thoughts too sacred for display
 In the broad light of common day,
 A peaceful home, a loving wife,
 Children, who are a crown of life ;
 These may prolong the years of man
 Beyond the Psalmist's narrow span."

—*Young Man.*

The Power of Faith

We may hope for many things and work for them with much interest, but we have no confidence worthy the name of faith till it enlists the whole of our being and all our strength. There are many shades of conviction between a timid hope just lifting its head above an ocean of fear, in which it lies half-drowned and the joyous, unquestioning certainty that leads a martyr to the stake. The difference appears to be in the extent to which the mind's congress of faculties can be brought under subjection. With much of its energy distracted and unused, only a fraction of its potential strength can be turned to a given purpose. The word "faith" should be reserved for a belief or expectation which practically brings all, that is within us to one settled thought and course of action.

Perhaps no mistake is more common at this time than that of supposing that such faith as this is chiefly an affair of the understanding. The weakness of any position touching the conduct of life that is based merely on intellectual assent is that it can never be made wholly free from doubt. Every question brought before the understanding has two sides. Scarcely ever is a cause so bad, but the ingenious intellect can bolster it up with a show of reason and argument that makes it specious enough to win converts, and gives it a kind of standing place in the courts of logic. Much more, when the scales of probability are not unequally balanced, there are considerations on either side, which taken by themselves, seem to be convincing and unanswerable. He who has nothing else to go by, will often halt and hesitate between conflicting views, even in matters of the utmost consequence, and, like the double-minded man of whom the apostle speaks, will be "unstable in all his ways."

The very education of the intellect, unless some remedy for this weakness can be found, is quite certain to put a man at disadvantage in the race and warfare of life. Where the keener vision sees two paths, and stands somewhat puzzled and at loss, trying to decide between them, the man of duller sight, seeing but one way, very likely has pressed forward and grasped the prize before his better furnished competitor has concluded which way to turn.

In broad contrast to this irresolution the quality of faith is that of resolute, whole-souled earnestness. Faith has power, because, when it has obtained the mastery of a mind, there are no more questions to be asked, no doubts to be weighed, no scruples to be conciliated. Under its leadership, the whole life is poured out without reserve, and the mind is able to command every last vestige of its resource and energy. Seldom, indeed, can intellectual certitude remotely approximate the power which faith has always manifested in the life of mankind. Either the things about which it is certain are not of sufficient importance, to lead to great deeds or it cannot be certain enough in great issues to bend all wavering inclinations to its sway. For practical purposes, faith has always been immensely the superior force.

But, faith is often fanatical and blind. It is perfectly possible to have faith in the wrong thing, and then there is no end to the mischief that may ensue. In view of the terrible ruin and havoc, that a despotic faith has wrought in the past, we see that our critical faculties have their mission to fulfil, and are needed to hold such fearful energies, in check. Their tendency to follow shadows needs to be corrected. Their unscrupulous methods of rule must be changed for the ways of justice and humanity. Their blind allegiance to whatever has called them into play, must be made to distinguish between reason and unreason, the true and the false.

But the lesson which thinking men appear to have learnt very imperfectly as yet, is that faith is not the product of their criticism. The intellect may rightly undertake to purge faith of its grossness, to cast out its superstitions, and to broaden its views of human good. But of itself the intellect cannot create such faith, as has called forth, what is best and noblest in human life heretofore, or put in place of it, any certainty that has its kindling and commanding energy. No

chain of logic was ever yet forged strong enough to bind the affections of men, and carry them through those fiery ordeals in which every heart of man has, sooner or later, to be tried. Our likings and inclinings may borrow the help and countenance of reason or they may set it wholly at defiance. They do not spring up in obedience to the voice of reason or fall into silence when authority bids them hush their clamorous demands.

But there should be no failure of faith in the world, though the intellect does not produce it. The higher ethical and spiritual life puts forth great and confident hopes as naturally and as surely as a tree puts forth its leaves, if only the suspicions of the intellect do not blast them in the bud. Men are not by nature sceptics or cynics; but that is what they make themselves, if that is what they become. The affirmations that spring from the inmost being of every healthful mind, are not to be crushed by any load of affliction or disappointment, that may be laid upon them. They are often made needlessly ashamed by the intolerance of an intellect which does not allow faith any right to exist, save on grounds which it tried and proved.

This is senseless and wrong. The world of human interests would have gone to destruction again and again, but for the faith that clung to its purpose against all predictions of the keenest social and political sagacity. Faith is the wisdom of the soul; and, though not all infallible, it is generally wiser in its main assertions than any mind can be which attempts to dispense with its help. Criticism is good, when its effect is to increase our faith; It is worse than useless when it assumes that the enlightened man is to walk only by "sight" and is to believe nothing that he cannot prove.

—*Christian Register.*

Religion induces Virtues

The function of religious belief in the development of man is higher than that of physical knowledge. The use of this last is to satisfy the wants of his bodily nature, to enable him to live comfortably. But purity of heart, the elevation of the feelings, the depth of the soul, a firm adherence to truth without regard to practical effects, equanimity in the midst of the severest troubles of

life, these and such other virtues, it is religion alone that can induce. Man can attain to the full measure of his capabilities only through the instrumentality of religious belief. Without it, he will be a superior kind of beast with aims and aspirations low and stunted. But as he is, he is a child of the Infinite with his aspirations ever increasing, ever widening. Are we then to believe that, that belief which is at the root of man's higher development is to be considered to have nothing corresponding to it in the world of reality, while that which satisfies his lower nature only is alone real and certain? —R. G. B.

Wisdom Tabloids (6)

Remember always thy end, and how that time lost never returns. Without care and diligence thou shalt never get virtue.

If thou begin to grow lukewarm, it will begin to be evil with thee.

But if thou give thyself to fervour of spirit thou shalt find much peace, and feel less labour, through the assistance of God's grace, and the love of virtue.

The fervent and diligent man is prepared for all things.

It is harder work to resist vices and passions, than to toil in bodily labours.

He that avoideth not small faults by little and little falleth into greater.

Thou wilt always rejoice in the evening, if thou spend the day profitably.

Be watchful over thyself, stir up thyself, admonish thyself, and whatever becomes of others neglect not thyself.

The more holy violence thou usest against thyself, the greater shall be thy spiritual profiting. Amen,

—*Thomas A. Kempis*

The Efficacy of Prayer

There are several things which stand before us prominently at the very threshold of this discussion. The universality of prayer among the sons of man; the fact that the greatest and best in their

moments of supreme joy and most terrible sorrows have spontaneously fled to prayer for refuge and thanksgiving; the obvious outcome of devout prayers in new courage and refinement of spirit,—the practical fruitage in thousands of lives,—these facts indicate that prayer does somehow stand for a commanding reality. Beneath the superstitions associated with it, and they have been manifold; in spite of the gross and trivial ends toward which it has been directed, and its misuse has been wide-spread—till down at the bottom there must be some abiding variety. Through its blindest and most mistaken exercise, there must have run some helpful ministry, or this attitude would not have been maintained through the centuries. Through the long ages, men would not have presented themselves so earnestly and unceasingly at “the soul’s east window of divine surprise,” had they not been rewarded with glorious visions and melodies of a diviner life. Thus the appeal to human experience creates the presumption in favour of prayer as a legitimate and fruitful method in the economy of our spiritual life.

On the other hand it is true that the modern mind has committed itself unreservedly to the scientific interpretation of nature which to many has seemed the negation of prayer. No ancient notion or venerable agency can survive in this intensely realistic atmosphere, unless it can pass the test of experience and show a basis in the facts of the universe. Whoever lays bare a new fact reveals the throne at which science serves; and even the worshipful heart has learnt to plead. Let me build my altar only of those realities which remain when criticism has done its work and discovery has completed its task. Whether religion stand or fall—whether prayer abide or vanish, the man instructed by science has given his unbounded allegiance to one central principle—to conform his thought and life to the facts themselves, whatever they may be; and here we find the highest expression of a rational faith—a faith in the real divinity of the universe. So that our interpretation of prayer must conform itself to the fact. How far prayer may be reasonable or effectual, must depend upon the constitution of these realms of matter and spirit which make up the divine order, of which we are a part. The ministry of prayer, its limits and its possibilities, must be determined by an appeal to these realities,—and to all the realities, we must remember; for, whatever the facts are, they are the facts which condition our life, and they are divine facts.

The extremes of the problem respecting the efficacy of prayer are perfectly clear, and about them there is nowhere any dispute. No one would expect a prayer, however urgent or universal, that the sun rise an hour earlier tomorrow morning, to be answered. We take this position, not because we believe so little in God, but because we believe so much in the transcendent divineness of the natural order. In fact, so great is our reverence for Him who resides in all facts, that to us such a petition would seem an impiety. On the other hand, a desire for holiness rising from the mysterious depths of the soul, and putting itself forth as a commanding urgency in all the ranges of the human effort,—such a prayer, as the most undevout materialist would acknowledge, will necessarily be answered; for the answer to it is wrapped up in its own urgency. The very desire creates the thing desired; and the answer comes from God, because he resides in the spiritual mechanism through which the prayer springs and flows. Now, the problem made difficult to many by the conflict going on in their minds between the traditional notions of religion and nature and scientific discoveries, is to decide how far the efficacy of prayer extends between these extremes.

But here the advocate of natural law in its severe aspects interposes with his objection, which seems to many to sweep prayer off its place as a reasonable method of spiritual dynamics into the discredited realm of mere superstitions. Do you expect that your prayer, the selfish wish or mere whim of a frail human being, will change the order of nature, or violate the law established by the Almighty? This does appear tremendously unreasonable; and here is a valid argument against much that goes under the name of prayer. As already stated, we must be obedient to the facts of this universe. All prayers that attempt to set aside divine realities are certainly useless, and reveal a lack of intelligent faith in God. But does prayer necessarily seek to violate the law of nature, or is the prayerful spirit essentially a petition that the order of the universe be changed? Is it not possible that the answer to the true prayer flows out from God by processes much under law and order as the growth of the tree or the creation of poem or cathedral? One florist leaves the box in which he has planted flower seeds uncovered and flat on the ground. Another covers his with glass, and tips it up towards the sun that its rays may fall more directly upon it. This latter florist does not violate nature, but he will hand you a bouquet long

before the plants of his neighbour are half-grown. May not this be the precise difference between the prayerful and the undevout soul ? In placing himself in the attitude of reverence and surrounding himself by the fostering atmosphere of aspiration, the man of prayer gains a more life-giving relation to the Source of all-being, and thus blossoms earlier into the beauty of holiness, but by processes as natural though belonging to another realm as those used by the gardener. And may it not be that the true office of prayer, after all, is not so much (in fact, is not at all) to violate the law of nature as it is to put us into the ways of God, that we may the more easily reach the end of our being ? It is not to set aside, but to bring us into harmony with divine law. There is an interpretation of prayer to which the advocate of the scientific idea of law can make no objection, for it is built upon this very idea of law. Prayer is that desire of the soul which carries me farther into the sunshine of the spiritual world hastening my blossom time, as I go. And the answer contemplates no violation of natural order. It comes not from the breaking, but the obeying of the laws, of my nature.

We must remember that man stands at the meeting point of two realms,—two worlds unite in him ; by what mystic cords the union is made no one can tell. The fact is obvious : Its explanation neither science nor philosophy can give. On the one hand, man is a part of the material universe, where physical results must be reached by the use of physical agencies. To build a bridge, to move a train, to warm a room, certain physical means must be employed. All the prayer of all the saints could never span the river with a bridge, nor move a train the smallest fraction of an inch, nor raise the temperature of a room any part of a degree. The failure of prayer to accomplish such results is not because there is no God, not because nature is undivine, but because in this realm, prayer is not a dynamic agency. To attempt to produce these results in the world of matter, by the use of any except physical means is so far an act of impiety ; it is so far a disloyalty to the divine order. The simple fact is that God has not given human desire a mechanical efficiency in the physical world any more than he has given the force of gravity a psychological efficiency, in the world of human thought. The ancient farmer offered a sacrifice and prayed to secure good crops ; but the modern

farmer who shapes his labours, according to the science of agriculture, is the more religious labourer. He is living in that realm more obedient to the law of God.

The objection is often made to this view of the subject that it places a cruel fate on the throne of the universe. All things are put by this theory under the reign of an inexorable and unsympathetic law. We are bound fast in an unchangeable order, where love pleads in vain for the victim in the path of the crushing wheels and where mercy has no power to save. And there are those who cry out against the despotism of the force. I must believe in a God of mercy who in answer to my prayer will overrule these laws and rescue the sufferer; I must believe in a heart of love who in answer to my love will reorder nature to save my dear ones! This is not an infrequent nor a very strange demand. But those who make it, are stronger in sentiment than in thought. Overrule laws to rescue sufferers? This implies lack of faith in the divinity of the laws: it implies a positive cruelty in the laws which causes the sufferings. I cannot think so poorly of nature's laws. You ask that they be overruled that the sufferer be rescued. But is not this an irreligion, figure of speech, which wrongfully assigns imperfection and injustice to the laws? You would reorder nature to make it more divine. But were not all these mishaps of our day seen from the beginning, when nature was first ordered, and compensations provided in the great sweep of things?

There is another way of looking at this matter. May we not find the mercy of God in the order of nature itself, so that instead of speaking despairingly of the despotism of force, we may see infinite love where all was apparently so darkly fateful while the very uniformity and rigidity of nature against which we so protested and to cure which, we resorted to prayer, may it not, after all, be the expression of a love greater than we had imagined? The fact that in the railroad wreck, the iron bar did not bend before your entreaty to let your dear one escape, may have led you to conclude that nature is cruel. But, when you look at the marvellous web of iron and steel suspended high in the air, over which thousands pass daily from city to city in safety, just because there is an established order in nature and iron is always iron, then is it not possible to feel that the large mercy of God is in the order of nature, that the despotism of force

is a providence of love, and that our prayers are not indeed to soften what we had hastily called the cruelty of laws? So that, instead of saying, this must be a loveless world, unless prayer can change the natural order, we come to that higher reverence which sees that this world be a very undivine universe, if prayer had such efficacy, if these material forces could be hoisted about, by the desires of every pious but short-sighted soul. And all through the ages, the abuse of prayer has been this attempt to secure by it, what can only come through the application of physical agencies. For, whatever prayer may be in its own sphere, we have learnt enough of this universe to see that it has no magic power to set aside the laws of nature or to secure for us instantaneously, what the processes of nature need long periods to evolve.

But man is something more than physical body: He is linked to another realm, the spiritual order, which has methods and processes peculiar to itself; and these must be as loyally obeyed, to build a noble character and secure the fruits of the spirit, as the principles of mechanics in constructing a machine. The trouble comes from carrying over the methods of one realm into the other where they are inoperative. We attempt to produce on one level of existence, certain results by processes which belong to another order of creation. And when we fail, our failure is not due to the fact that the universe is undivine or our method useless in its proper place, but to the fact that we have made an unlawful application of our efforts. We cannot raise a hundred pound weight by prayer, for we are here in a realm where mechanical energy is needed; but the crushing weight of sorrow or shame pressing upon a human heart cannot be lifted by the most powerful engine, for we are here in a realm of the spirit, where only the dynamics of love can avail. So that he who uses prayer as a substitute for a mechanical energy is so far unscientific and irreligious; and he who ignores this spiritual side of our life, and neglects those methods for its enrichment of which prayer is one, is also so far unscientific and irreligious. We must remember that the human soul is in touch with the Father of spirits, between whom and ourselves there are methods of access as direct as, between our body and the material universe. Our love pours into us from him as directly as the sun furnishes the energy, by which our hearts beat. Organs of spiritual communication exist,

between our souls and the infinite soul, just as channels of vitality bind bodies to the resources of the material universe. By spiritual processes we feed on him who is Spirit, as by physical functions we appropriate our powers of body from the world of matter. And the office of prayer is simply a practical application of that fundamental truth of life and religion. 'In him we live and move and have our being.' Prayer, then, is not a beggary and not performance, but a function of the soul by which we appropriate from God that life which constitutes our spirituality. It is not an operative agent in the realm of physical facts, but, far better and higher, a process by which we enrich ourselves from the reservoir of divine life. For we lie as inlets about the great ocean of being, and it is prayer which lifts the gate between, that our ripple of desire may resort itself to the waiting life beyond and also that the swelling tides of that Creative-ness may rush through us and lift us out of weakness; We spring as buds out of the mystical tree of life; and prayer pulls into us by an economy all its own; but as natural in its way as that which feeds the leaves on every shrub, those spiritual energies which refresh and enrich our own inner life.

The scope and agency of prayer lie, then within the realm of our spiritual life; no less divine and no less needed because not an agency for overruling the natural order; but more divine and more needed, because a method by which we appropriate the energies and perfect the qualities which enrich us as men. Prayer is the attitude of reverence, which is the attitude of every sane mind as it looks out upon this wondrous universe, a sweet and solemn mood, in which we feel the glory of our sonship, the vastness of our heritage, the sacredness of our responsibilities,— a feeling of immense value on the market and in the home, for it braces us when we are weak, restrains us in moments of waywardness, and over-arches every humble task with mastery and solemnity. Prayer is a method of communion by which we realize the affiliation of our own lives with the Infinite life, feeling the love of our frail hearts descending into us from one who is Absolute Love, and tracing our thoughts to their rootage in one, who is Supreme Truth. Prayer, too, is an act of aspiration, by which we mount from what is low and narrow and ignoble to our diviner possibilities, the deep desire in us laying hold of the spiritual resources, which God always keeps ready by the side of every soul

that asks for light and love. Does some one say that this makes prayer simply a petition to one's self, which has only a reflex or subjective influence? But where shall I find God, if not in my own soul? It is what is thought there that he over-hears. It is not prayer to myself, but prayer in myself to Him by whom I live. And that the outcome of my prayer is subjective in all that I can expect and all that I really need: Love, hope, holiness—these are, indeed, subjective; but, if prayer will help me with these, it is enough.

If in mid-ocean the shaft of the steamer breaks, the divine thing to do is not to pray that winds and waves be stilled, but to mend the shaft. But we sail across another ocean, our souls are ships upon the sea of Infinite Being; and there it is prayer that spreads the sails that catch the winds of the spirit that will bear us toward the heaven where abides the peace of God. —*The Unitarian*.

Principle underlying Social Reform

We should nurture in our hearts the great forces which bring about the reform of society, viz., truth, justice and sympathy. Two of the greatest historians of England have told us that the moral law governs the affairs of the world; its observance alone ensures national prosperity. The strongest of the forces, which are steadily bearing nations onward to improvement or decay are, according to Lecky, the moral ones. 'Their permanent political well-being' he says 'is essentially the outcome of their moral state.' The moral law seeks to purify private life and to affect social justice, and through these alone is the political well-being of a nation possible.—*R. G. B.*

Tears of Devotion

Tears of devotion have their use and are exceedingly useful. They are beneficial to the devotee, as universal experience testifies and acceptable to the Lord. What indeed can be a more acceptable offering unto the father than the tears of sincere love, flowing from the tender heart of His trusting child? Over these tears, man has no direct control. He cannot call them forth, nor restrain them at will. "Just as in this world" says a Catholic Saint, "we can neither make it rain nor cease raining when we will, so neither can

we weep when we could fain do so out of devotion, nor restrain our tears, when some sudden gust of feelings calls them forth. For the most part of this, is no fault of ours, but so ordered by God's providence which wills to travel by a dry and desert road, enduring toil and hardness." There is truth in the above, but genuine tears are priceless pearls wherewith divine mercy enriches us,—rain-drops of grace which descend from heaven. They are not always of the result of our own exertions, but of the action of the Holy Spirit on the heart. Dryness of heart is a sin, and we must be on our guard against it. In its normal condition, the soul must be moved to tears as often as it feels the Lord's tenderness and compassion. Can he who sits at the feet of the dear mother resist tears? If we cannot call forth tears of love, by our mere fiat, we may place ourselves under the necessary conditions of emotional excitement. And if it be true that the Lord tries and punishes men now and then by leading them through the desert road, He maketh His loving devotees "Lie down in green pastures" and leadeth them "Beside the still waters." He maketh them so happy that they dance joyfully, shedding tears of joy.

Prayer (4)

What is Prayer? The word is used in different senses by different people. It is generally understood to mean a set form of words or a prescribed formula in general use in churches, in temples, or in other places of worship, approved by the priests in charge of these places, and sanctioned by immemorial usage, and addressed to God at certain regular hours. To this mode of addressing the Almighty different religions give different names. But it is not prayer. The mere uttering of certain words in a mechanical way is not prayer. Because it does not satisfy the one essential condition which, so to say, is the very soul of prayer.

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Prayer in ordinary language means the asking of a favour of one who is in a position to grant it. Prayer, therefore, presupposes the existence of two persons. In man's relation with man we often make use of prayer, that is, we often open out our hearts to those whom we love or to those who are in a position to help us, when we are overwhelmed by some great sorrow or by some great trouble and

find that we are unable to bear the burden unaided. This is an experience through which every one of us, be his position in life, high or low, has to pass at one time or another of his life. In its religious sense prayer means opening out our hearts to Him Who is our Father and Whose children we are. It is based on the belief that we are the objects of God's ceaseless love and that He is our loving Friend, our unfailing help in days of troubles and tribulations.

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Prayer, however, should not be understood as a means by which man can turn God away from His purposes. It should not be looked upon as a weapon in the hands of man to alter the will of God. God is love but His Government of the universe is regulated by law. He is omniscient, and, therefore, knows what is good for us better than we know it ourselves. It is, therefore, that we often find that our earnest prayers for this thing or that, often remain unanswered by Him. If God were to grant every prayer that man addresses to Him the government of the world would in fact be transferred from God's hands into the hands of foolish and ignorant men. Would that be a desirable change ?

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Prayer, in its true sense, should be conceived in the spirit in which a child approaches and places all its wants before its earthly father. The child is not afraid to go near its father and ask of him what it wants. The child is not afraid to approach its father with any request it likes, because, it is sure of its father's love. The child may ask anything of its father. But the father knows many more things than the child. He can judge whether the granting of the child's request would do the child good. If he thinks that the granting of its request would do the child harm, he, as a loving father, would not grant the child's request.

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God is all-wise. Therefore it is, that often our earnest prayers to Him do not bear the fruit we desired from them. And who, that has passed through this disappointment, does not know that in the light of subsequent events the withholding of things that he prayed for, was the best thing that happened to him under the circumstances? "Not my will, but Thine, be done" should, therefore, be the attitude of every one who opens out his heart to the Almighty in prayer.

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If God is all-wise, if He is a loving Father why does He want us to pray to Him? Can He not grant all that we need without our praying for it? It is not difficult to answer these questions. If God is what we describe Him to be, that is, a Loving Father, it is but natural that He should desire His children to come to Him, to open out their hearts to Him, and make Him a confidant of their hopes and aspirations and seek of Him help and guidance in their perplexities. Does not the human father expect his children to come to him when they are stricken with some sorrow or worried by some trouble? And do not the children, if they love their father and have perfect trust in his goodness and in his ability to lighten their burdens go to him for help and advice. If this is true in the case of the earthly father when there subsists between him and his children perfect love and confidence, how much more true it must be in the case of Him Who is the Father of us all.

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But there is yet another reason why we cannot help going to God and placing before Him our sorrows, trials and temptations. The reason has its roots deep down in human nature and rests on that instinct which tells man that God is his Father and Friend and therefore the one sure help in moments of adversity and perplexity. It is, therefore, that man, unless he is blinded by self-conceit and intoxicated by the so-called scientific knowledge, instinctively turns to God and seeks His guidance and blessing by prayer.

"It is hardly possible in human nature" says one writer "for any one to know and trust in an earthly friend and yet not to seek any converse or communion with him. The law of our being makes such communion inevitable. The loving intercourse between parents and children is a perpetual witness to this fact of our nature. Therefore we may be sure that the Father of our souls loves to see His children drawing nigh unto Him in prayer seeking the comfort and help of His presence."

What should be our prayer to the Almighty? Shall we pray to Him to bless us with the goods of this world? Is it right to pray for things that are of the earth, earthly, and, therefore, transitory? These are questions which would naturally occur to one who wishes to live a life of true piety and yet would not run away from his duties in this world.

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There is nothing intrinsically wrong or immoral in praying to the Almighty for the good things of this world. But as one writer has well put it "as we grow older and wiser, we cease to besiege God with petitions for physical and temporal good and we begin to care far more for moral and spiritual advancement. It is only when we put away childish things that we see the unspeakable superiority of the interests of the soul over those of the body; and nothing assuredly was ever heard of, which keeps up that vivid perception so much as constant prayer and communion with our Father." When he realises the value of prayer in this sense then only will man be able to echo out of the fulness of his heart, "I sought the Lord, and He heard me; yea, He hath delivered me out of all fear."

—*Truth Seeker.*

Time, no Working Force

The changes that our present circumstances are calculated to produce may be good or may be bad. The expression that is often used in connection with this view is that time will work out the necessary changes. But time is no force, it is simply a category of the understanding to distinguish one event from another. The real force comes from human motives which are invoked by the circumstances in which men find themselves. If, therefore, time works out changes, it must be by the force of human motives. And as the lower motives are always more powerful than the higher ones, though these are nobler in their nature, when you leave things to take their own course, the changes that will be effected will be such as the lower motives of man bring about; that is to say, the changes will not always be good or rational. In order, therefore, that the changes which our present circumstances or the causes indicated above, are likely to produce, may be good or rational it is necessary to discuss and decide which we will have and which not. In other words, social changes must not be left to work themselves out, but should always be under the guidance of our reason and moral sense.

—*R. G. B.*

The Phases of the Soul

Conversion of the soul means not a sudden attainment of perfection but a turning of the face of the spirit towards God—a permanent resolution to submit to His will in every thing. It does not mean a fully matured spiritual life, but a new birth of the soul—the death of the flesh and the beginning of the spiritual existence. Salvation begins here and is completed through eternity. Salvation is thus not a state of rest but of eternal progress; not a state of perfection attained in a moment of supreme grace, but an eternal march towards perfection; not a stagnant condition of the soul however wise and loving and pure, but a never ending current of life flowing towards Infinite wisdom, love and purity.

Salvation thus means an eternal progress of the spirit. Progress in what?—wisdom, love and purity. There are the three phases of the soul corresponding to the three psychological divisions of mental processes the cognitive, the affective and the conative. Wisdom is the knowing or the cognitive side of the soul, love its affective side, or the side of feeling and purity its conative side or the side of willing. Thus salvation involves the progress of all these three phases of the soul. As perfection means perfection in wisdom, love and purity, salvation must necessarily include these three sides of the soul. And a scheme of salvation that excludes any one of these, must evidently be one-sided and imperfect. Even from a worldly point of view, when we find a man of high intellectual culture without a corresponding culture of the heart or will, or a man of well-regulated feeling without a corresponding culture of the intellect or will, or a man of great strength of will, without a cultivated intellect and heart, we cannot take him as a type of perfect character. All such characters are regarded as defective. So a progress in wisdom only or love only or purity only cannot be called a progress towards perfection. And a scheme of salvation which aims at the development of one of these only, at the cost of others cannot but be regarded as defective.

Fruitful Life

Man is not only being but becoming, that he may be a higher being from day to day. Money, rank, eminence, power,—not to speak of low and weakening pursuits of pleasure and sin—dazzle man

and hold him captive in their grip, when they must minister to him. And in their pursuit he sacrifices all things that lend life not only its charm and grace and ornament, but its solid and abiding worth both for himself and the world at large. In this pursuit of the shadow and the consequent neglect of the substance of Life lies the tragedy and failure of most human lives.

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We are the children of light. Money, rank, power—these may come or not come, man's face must be turned to light and more light as he advances in life's journey. His inner light, summed up in character, conscience, personality and culture, must burn steadily and with added lustre, as it is fed continuously from the experiences of life—be they bitter or sweet, exhilarating or otherwise. How is this end to be achieved? Through self-examination.

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A man must constantly ask himself "Am I growing in knowledge? Am I preferring from day to day nobler things to mean? Is my purpose becoming clearer to me from day to day? What means am I using to fulfil it? Have wisdom and reverence and love for truth come to dwell in my heart? Am I all alive and sensitive without being morbidly introspective? Do I know how to weigh experience aright? The way he is able to answer these questions, either affirmatively or negatively, to a large extent determines whether his life is being fulfilled or lost.

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Life's fruition consists not in adorning its scaffolding but in keeping the inner structure, sound, clean, pure and flooded with sunshine and air all over. Body, mind, heart and soul, action and contemplation, truth and beauty—all these must be fully developed and harmoniously blended; and, above all, there must be peace and love, and a spirit of heroic endurance. And these must be developed in the school of life itself and not by isolation and asceticism.

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"Keep yourself in the fresh air of the world; do your best in the world's affairs; study the active rather than the passive; do not be an ergoteur but take pains for clear thought and limpid expression", is the sage counsel of John Stuart Mill.

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Life is an eternal quest after light and truth, but light and truth must not dry up in us the springs of affection and service. Because then life is only half fulfilled.

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Life is not all a feast or a splendid pageant. It is often hard and soul killing drudgery. But that drudgery has to be faced manfully without allowing it to make us mean or kill our soul. The radiance of life must come from within, whatever be its squalor without. And that is why life must be imbedded in principles because "a commanding grasp of principles is at the very root of coherency of character." And without coherency of character we cannot have the lofty indifference to the accidents of life, which, in the lives of so many of us, loom so large and loom so great.

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And what is the test that life so lived is really fulfilled? The first test is that such a life is free from hurry and feverish excitement of any kind. As Vauvenargues has said such a life plans for eternity but in execution of the plan lives it steadily, calmly and vigorously from day to day. Absence of hurry and excitement and perfect inward peace is the first test of a fruitful life.

* * * *

Another test is that such a life is not a life that shrinks from difficulties or labour of any sort. Shrinking from difficulties or labour is an inverted form of selfishness. A life fulfilled is a life that knows the dignity of hard work and is absolutely free from any taint of coddling selfishness.

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A life that is fulfilled is a life of service and dedication to some noble cause. It is either spent in the service of humanity in any of the spheres of practical philanthropy, or in the silence of the study, liberating forces that form the tidal movement of opinion from land mark to landmark.

—*Truth Seeker.*

The Conflict of Spiritual Life

God has ordained for those who seek to know Him and to do His will, a life of severe struggle in this world. The necessity of this struggle arises from the fact that we naturally believe more in things seen than in things unseen, and consequently our

hopes and fears, longing and disappointments are related more to the former than to the latter; and religion demands reversal of these conditions. It requires us to believe more in the invisible than in the visible; it demands that our fondest hopes should be fixed on the world beyond the senses, and our deepest solicitude should be about the things of that world. The aim of the righteous is to bring about this reversal to substitute the eternal which the senses cannot apprehend in the place of the temporal which is continually appealing to every organ of perception and every passion of our unregenerated nature, to make God as real to us as men and women amidst whom we live, to teach us to believe in the moral law as a stern reality which we cannot any more ignore with impunity than we can dash our heads against a post without suffering for it. The essence of spirituality, therefore, is faith in certain things which ordinarily seem unreal to us. Is religion, then, something alien to our nature, something thrust upon us from outside which is wholly repugnant to our feelings and instincts? No; it is itself the supreme instinct of the human soul. But it is also true that we are born with passions which rebel against it, and with faculties which fall short of its demands; and the conflict of spiritual life is but an effort on our part to bring every part of our nature into harmony with the dictates of religion. If religion were something foreign to our nature, it could not furnish us with an adequate motive for resisting our lower passions. Human nature is essentially progressive; and religion is but the bringing out of the latent possibilities of our nature, the unveiling of what lies hidden in the depths of the soul. It is not the importation into ourselves of something from without, it is the revelation of our true selves, the discovery of the dignity and the privileges of life. This discovery cannot be made without long and persistent efforts, as mean things lie thick on the surface of life.

The struggles of spiritual life become difficult not only on account of our own want of faith in things invisible, but also by reason of this want of faith among others about us. The unbelief of others discourages our attempts to apprehend the unseen. It seems so natural to accept the standard prevailing around us, that it requires great moral strength to cherish an ideal that is in conflict with that standard. The higher our ideal, the more lonely we are in this world. This it is that makes the companionship of saintly men

so precious. Their influence encourages our highest aspirations, and the heights they have attained awaken the hope that our weary upward ascent will not be in vain. The value of such encouragement to our righteous efforts, it is impossible to overrate. The very presence of those to whom the things we long to realise are sober realities has something inspiring in it; and often even the most frivolous are astonished into seriousness by the sight of men whose thoughts are fixed upon the things of the spiritual world. The best spiritual help that can be rendered to us by others, is the awakening of high hopes in our bosoms by the example of the success they have achieved, and the rebuke silently administered to our ignoble impulses by their holiness and self-sacrifice. The desire to know is the precursor of knowledge, and our curiosity about spiritual things is stimulated by our reflecting on the fact that those who have been able to trample under foot the temptations of this world could not have done so, if they had not known regions of wonderful beauty which made it easy for them to renounce the prizes of this life. How fair must those regions be which give godly men the power to look with indifference upon the most coveted possessions of this world. We put great men to a wrong use when we make them the objects of blind reverence. The highest use we can make of them is to reflect on their lives as a means of aiding our faith in the unseen. If men have been able to lay down their lives for the sake of truth, if they have had the power to endure the most cruel persecution for its sake, truth must have a beauty that we know not, it must render accessible springs of peace and joy that have not been tasted of.

As a means of cultivating faith in the unseen, even more important than the companionship of righteous men or the study of saintly lives, is loyalty to the truths we have been permitted to know. It is of little use for us to seek out holy men or to read devout books, if we do not constantly strive to obey the will of God as far as it has been revealed to us. The faithful performance of humble duties is a greater aid to spiritual progress than indulging in sensational manifestations of reverence or religious enthusiasm. Ours is a religion which insists on dutifulness as an essential part of worship. Is not obedience the highest worship? It may be sweeter to fill the mind with fine emotions than to be labouriously performing hard, prosaic duties. But let us know that in God's universe, there must be recompense for him who walks along the rugged path of duty. H

cannot miss any true joy in the long run. On the other hand, the sentimental dreamer who would have the sweetness of religion without obeying its stern injunctions, must some day be made to retrace his steps and begin again with obedience.

Trying as is the struggle which righteousness imposes on us, God in His mercy does not leave us to toil on, without frequent intervals of sacred joy and peace to support us. We should sink on the path if we were not permitted to know something of the glory of God, and fair indeed are the green isles which the revelation of that glory makes for us in the wide sea of hard struggles and bitter experience.

—I. M.

Solution to the Riddle of Life

Think of the limitations of these lives of ours, the darkness of our minds, our ignorance of the past and the future, the many enchanting voices that call us away from the purposes that our spirits tell us are the true purposes of life. "Places on the isthmus of a middle state, a being dimly wise and darkly great," how can we feel satisfied with the conditions that obtain in this life? It is for religion to give us assurance of the life beyond, to give us as it were a message, a positive promise that the life here is only an episode to an infinitely more lasting life hereafter. So, what may seem to us an incomplete story, the incompleteness of a life—is not incomplete when viewed in the light of eternity. It has come, it has shed bright its light, it has shone forth the glory that it was intended to shine, and it has gone and become one with the eternal light which has shone, and which is shining to-day, and will shine ever more. Thus religion by uniting the life of the individual with the life of the universe, the earthly with the cosmic, gives an aspect, a meaning, a significance to life that no science, no philosophy can ever do. And so ennobling life, so presenting life as one, and every life as organically related to the life of the cosmos, what does it make us do? It makes us realise the value of our own individual lives. Take man as a pure physical being. He comes. He has his struggles. He has his temporary successes. He has his joys and he has his sorrows, and the story appears to close abruptly. There seems to be no meaning, no

significance, no purpose in it. But when we enter religious sphere, when religion becomes the guide of our life, then we find a key to the mystery of life, then we find a solution to the riddle of life.

—N. G. W.

Spiritual Growth

If the belongings of an average human soul at any time were symbolised in visible images what a sorry picture would they make! Germs of noblest growths there would appear either undeveloped altogether or half-developed and stunted and eaten into by monstrous parasites and rank growths of noxious varieties would meet the eye at every point, on a ground plan of the highest conception, where everything was laid out with its due proportion of space and air, so as completely to obscure or disfigure the original idea. Sad as the story is, it is that which is most common. But such unsightly disfiguration readily escapes notice. Self-examination is a rare practice, self-criticism is even rarer and much more difficult. For the ordinary purposes of life, appearances alone seem enough. They take the place of the reality which always is so very difficult to secure. Keeping well in the eyes of the world is a means of keeping well in one's own estimation, and when one has reached this state of mind, there is no chance of any improvement left thereafter. And yet it is true that when men begin to feel that their interests are bound up with the reality, they are no longer satisfied with mere appearances. Only vanity is gratified by show. Mere repute, no doubt, brings certain advantages in its train. But nothing can come up to the reality, and if that were as easy and as possible to secure as its counterfeit, nobody would be content with the latter. In the same way, every one will like to attain to as high a degree of virtue as may be possible. But its real importance often drops out of sight and in the midst of more pressing and clamorous appetites and passions which overpower the will, such attainment is thought to be out of reach of average men and women. And no doubt, if virtue were an acquisition that was to be made, when made, once for all, there were something to be said for such despondency. In reality, however, a virtuous temperament is a growth of gradual development. It is only secured by persistent endeavour and constant attention. Each measure of progress achieved leads to the next.

whilst every false step carries one further and further from the regular path. In the ordinary course of life, the present has always a relation to the past and the future. For the past has helped to bring about the present, and the latter in its turn, will have a hand in moulding the future. Not that human will has no scope for action in regulating the course of events. Rather do both will and circumstance act in combination, each controlling and limiting the other. If, therefore, men were to keep before them the goal they have to reach and from time to time to take accurate measurements of their position and progress, there is no reason why they should not be able to suit their action to their circumstances and keep at all times to the path of spiritual progress. With every fresh effort they will meet with an accession of strength, just as every act of weakness will diminish the vigour of virtuous resolution. Further, the strength of the effort put forth on any occasion, will denote the measure of progress which has already been achieved. What is more when once on the way, there is no limit to the progress which may be made. Nor is it ever possible to stand still. New ideals will always rise before the eye and new struggles and duties invite our efforts. Until such ideals secure our allegiance, we shall not have made our position secure. For these ideals are the anchorages of the heart and buoy up our spirits against sloth and weariness which from time to time invade the soul. Not to advance under these circumstances is to fall back on the way. For when the fervour of resolution cools and paralyses the will, it at the same moment gives strength to the powers of darkness so that our next position will now be not where we were before, but a stage behind. In this way, does the spirit ever active and ever struggling with the difficulties of its position, with a steady resolution and under the stimulus of new and ever new ideals, advance from stage to stage in its path. All the noblest instincts of the heart thus gradually develop into life and vigour, more and more and each in proportion to its worth, but without impeding the growth of the rest, whilst the less meritorious feelings are kept in their proper positions so as to minister to the development of the higher without choking their growth. In the result, in place of the wild and lawless growth, which is so common, there rises to view a well-laid-out garden, as planned by its Maker with rich varieties of colour and wealth of foliage and beauty of leaf and flower, a sight to behold and admire.

A Grain of Sand or a Drop of Water

O believing brother, hast thou ever thought as to which of the two thou resemblest the most, a drop of water or a grain of sand? If thou hast not given a thought to it, do it soon for thy very salvation depends upon it. It is a question dealing with the very nature of your soul and according as you answer that question, your relations with the members of your family, friends, Church brethren, God's good men and even with God Himself will be regulated, a task which is of the utmost significance, because it is the right regulation of all these relationships, heavenly and earthly, divine and human, which constitutes true salvation. Hence see and know whether thou art more like an impervious atom which will touch another but outwardly, or like a readily assimilative and assimilable substance which will intermix with another and become indistinguishably one. Is not one of the chief properties or attributes of the soul what we call Love? And pray, what is love? Does it touch another outwardly or rather does it not intermingle with its object completely? And hence is it not always called *Ras* and compared by all poets of all nationalities to fluid objects such as wine or water? For this reason are we not right when we say that we are all little *Ras-bindus* and God the great *Ras-sagar*, and that we should ultimately unite with Him so completely as do the drops of water with the ocean? Read, my brother, how this ancient spiritual poetry is explained by modern philosophy of the West in the following lines. Says Mr. Boyce Gibson in his book called "God with us," "Prof Caird has been criticizing the tendency to atomic individualism, to that imperviousness of the moral consciousness which Kant's doctrine of the Categorical Imperative seemed to bring with it".....Referring to it he writes, "Only a revived social consciousness, which carries us beyond this isolating attitude, can bring moral deliverance: and he who will not take upon him the burden of the evil of others, and even accept it also as if it were his own guilt, can never get rid of his own." Here lies in a nutshell all the mystery of the nature of our soul revealed to us. We are not ourselves, so far as we remain separate from God and other selves: we are truly ourselves only so far and no more, as we are one with God and one with other souls.

Living Faith

How to find out the man of faith ? How to know that there is a living faith in a man ? There are sure signs by which you can distinguish the man of faith from the rest of the world. In the first place there is in him an absolute fearlessness about the consequences of what he says or does. He knows truth—a truth has been revealed to him, he says and acts it. He acts and lets the consequences to take care of themselves. Such an indifference to the opinions of others cannot be generated in the mind of a man unless he is conscious that he lives in constant presence of an Almighty Power, who is truth and right itself and in whose hand lies the sceptre that controls the universe. Want of this consciousness makes us waver in even trifling matters, whereas a man of faith sticks to his gun unflickingly under infinitely more trying circumstances. It is this faith that enabled Luther to say : “Let there be as many devils as there are tiles in the roof, yet I will go there.” It is this faith that was in Parker when, though surrounded by seven thousand infuriated foes, he said : “Kill me ! Throw me away ! That you sha’n’t.”

In the second place faith generates hope which is altogether beyond the ken of mortal flesh and blood—the hope in the ultimate triumph of truth—the truth which the world in one voice rejects, and this is the fate of all new truths—unless one sees with his very eyes that truth is God and God is truth. It is for this reason Christ never forgot to emphasise even when he was being led to the cross that the kingdom of God was at hand and Ram Mohan was firmly convinced that the descendants of those who persecuted him, would remember him with gratitude though there was not a single soul to say amen. Though surrounded by all sorts of favourable signs pointing to the sure success of Yuga Dharma we cannot keep our eye of hope fixed on it. He, the man of faith, could predict its success all contrary circumstances notwithstanding. This is due to the firm faith in the ultimate triumph of truth and this faith cannot be generated without a direct vision of truth.

In the third place, faith generates a perfect self-abnegation, a complete selflessness, a total absence of all reference to self. The man of faith lives and works as others do, but his heart is somewhere else. He thinks himself an instrument in the hands of God. He works but he never thinks that the credit of the success is his. His

only care is that the work is done, the truth is realised, the kingdom of God is established on earth. Everybody knows how Raja Ram Mohan Roy worked for the spread of education. But when the education committee was formed, the orthodox members raised the objection that if Ram Mohan's name were on the committee they would not serve. That was really a most difficult situation. Who would dare to approach Ram Mohan with that news, flagrantly unjust and absurd as the demand was. But in no time the great Raja came to know of it he of his own motion withdrew his name, saying that if such withdrawal would serve the cause of education he would be the last man to act otherwise. He worked not for his name but for the spread of education. He would as willingly help the cause from outside the committee. The reply simply staggered them to whom it was conveyed. Do we not with hundred times less claims demand hundred times more self-advertisement? But the case is otherwise with the man of faith. He has practically no self to assert.

These are the most characteristic signs of the man of true faith. We must be up and doing and leave no stone unturned to acquire such faith. The root of Religion is Faith.' There is no doubt about it, but this faith is not any blind faith, traditional faith but true living faith that is generated in the heart from personal acquaintance with the living God through direct and immediate communion with him, without which religion is a mere show and no reality. It does not stand us in good stead in life's trials and tribulations.

The Awakening of the Spirit

As the habits and practices of individuals reflect their ideas and character, so do social institutions ordinarily embody the prevailing currents of thought and the spirit of the age. The needs of men in the first instance give them birth and the particular form they assume is always determined by the ideas and circumstances of the time. Some of these needs are permanent, others are called forth by the exigencies of the time. But whether they answer to the permanent or to the temporary needs of people, all social institutions accurately reflect the character of the people and the ideas which rule among them. In the economy of social life the proper function of these institutions is to serve as aids and instruments to the happiness

and well-being of the people. Very often, however, as time passes, these ministers of human needs begin to rule and tyrannise over the minds of men. The particular need which brought them into vogue passes away or the people are ready to rise to a higher level of civilization. But their social institutions confine them to the range of ideas and character suited to their maintenance. "Every spirit" says Emerson, "makes its house but afterwards the house confines the spirit." The spirit is made for progress. Its institutions must in the nature of things be provisional merely. Like clothes which cover the body, they have to be renewed from time to time to suit new growths and altered circumstances. But this provisional character of human institutions is often lost out of sight. Time draws to them all the respect and love due to old associates who have tided one over many a difficulty and conferred many an obligation in the past. Their real significance, especially when their origin is lost in antiquity, is often magnified out of all proportion, so that they even assume the sanctity of divine institutions. With this, their conquest of the spirit which first called them to its aid, is complete. Henceforth, if any reform is desired, it will have to be commenced with a reform of the spirit itself. All discussion of the merits and demerits of the institutions will then fall beside the mark. For what has been accepted by the heart and transfigured by the imagination does not yield to arguments which merely address the understanding. Reason indeed is so seldom a guide to conduct with ordinary men and women, that in such matters involving such severe wrench from all sentiment and feeling, it can exercise but small influence in dethroning old idols and exposing old abuses. Under such circumstances, people obtain their deliverance from a change in their social, moral or political environment which has strength to educate and train the spirit to a level of thought and feeling far above that embodied in the old institutions. Then follows an age of reason which questions the validity of old feelings and requires every institution to justify its existence. For a period popular notions are unsettled and old idols disillusioned. But out of this disintegration of old beliefs and ideas, is born a new process of integration and settling of sentiments and beliefs. The strength, duration and scope of the critical spirit determine the extent of the reform to come. A wholesale scepticism issues in entire renovation of the fabric of social institutions, a moderate measure of it will only affect a few

institutions here and there. In the same way, if the critical spirit continues long enough and gathers sufficient force as it runs its course, there is guarantee of its leaving visible traces of its march behind. The character of the dissolving ferment is again determined by the strength of the new element which sets it in operation and the character of the people on whom it works. But no great reform is possible without such awakening of the spirit. For the people at large have to be roused out of their slumber. The old notions which brought conviction or lulled the conscience have to cease to convince or soothe the qualms of conscience. New aspirations must rise and new visions fill the imagination. For they proclaim an equality of rights and opportunity as being every man and woman's due and cry shame on our social institutions which embody the principle of inequality all round. They are enforced by a strength of will and supported by a certainty of result which is more powerful to open the heart and enlarge the vision than all the logic and declamation of discussion. Their force and impetus can pierce the thickest armour of superstition and prejudice of old sentiment and feeling, and their vitality can quicken to activity the dullest intellect and the most stolid ignorance. They are bound in their time to awaken the spirit and bring about a universal age of reason sufficient to reconstitute society on a broader basis and a more correct principle. Meanwhile, those who see the path by which Indian Society must travel, have to bide in patience, content to light the way and sweep it of all hindrances of ignorance, want of opportunity and the like and leave the rest to time, in the faith and hope that the spirit of the age is on their side, only it will take its own time to work its way in the minds and hearts of the people.

Spiritual Life (1)

(1) Constant worship of God in spirit with humility, love and gratitude ; (2) performance of good works ; (3) and faithful discharge of every successive duty for His sake keep the human spirit pure, fresh, tranquil, conscious of strength and moving onward on the path of spiritual progress.

(1) It is desirable that every individual should live such kind of life ; (2) and that every day in every family all persons should perform common worship and encourage and assist one another in

living such life; (3) for the same reason it is desirable that all members of the church should gather together occasionally for performing common worship and always encourage and assist one another in spiritual progress.

Such kind of life is necessary in order that we may feel ourselves in touch with the life of the Infinite and the life of all, and that we may experience the touch of the Infinite and of all within ourselves.

To feel this touch of unison with others, with all and with the Infinite is the life of the spirit.

Such life is essential for the well-being and prosperity of the individual, the family and the community. —V. R. J.

In Face of the Great Enigma

Sooner or later in life, men are brought face to face with the actual realities of life in vivid contrast with their anticipations and expectations of an earlier time. This is the critical period of life, when the faith that is in them is on its trial. For the great enigma of human life and destiny presses then for solution. The ways in which the problem is thereupon dealt with, are indeed very various. Some will cut the Gordian knot by putting an end to their existence, the scene of so much disappointment, vexation and trouble; others with less violent wills will betake themselves to a voluntary exile from the duties and anxieties of civil life. In either case, the problem is not solved but merely evaded. For they rise in indignant conflict with destiny, and prefer to remove themselves from their perplexities rather than resolve the perplexities themselves. Others, who tackle the problem itself, arrive at solutions which differ widely from one another. Some think, they can account satisfactorily for the inequalities and disappointments of life by pre-supposing an earlier existence, where they had their origin or there is something in early life and conduct which justifies the apparent anomalies. Others will call in aid fate or some principle of evil to account for the dissonance of fact and expectation. These solutions presume too much on human knowledge. They, however, teach the wisdom of resignation to the inevitable. And yet nothing renders it indispensable to seek in the past, an all-sufficing explanation of the present.

For instead of the present being itself a compensation for the past, the real compensation may be yet to come. Either in this life or in the next, the present wrong may be righted and hope and aspiration meet with their adequate fulfilment. All explanation of this character makes demand on faith, faith in a moral universe and a moral Governor of the world. It brings consolation to the troubled heart. At the same time it recognizes the incompetency of human powers and capacities to know and grasp the immensities by which they are surrounded. It is in fact the explanation of the humility and resignation, of patience and faith. One thing, however, is wanting to make it complete. Human power, cannot at any time, indeed, fail to be inadequate to cope with and understand the actualities of the world. But it is capable of growth and development. The difficulties of to-day may be the facilities of tomorrow, and what is inexplicable or unavoidable at one time or condition of society, may clear itself or admit of being avoided at another. The evil in the world may not altogether cease to be at any time, the problem of life may not admit of a clear demonstration, yet the former may abate more and more, as years pass, and the pressure of the latter may grow less and less, or continually shift its ground. For this reason, it may be our duty to face the great enigma not with passive resignation but by active work, by perpetual striving for the good, the true and the right. If the world is always in the process of becoming, if good at all times emerges from evil, if the evil changes its name as our experience grows, if our notions of justice are satisfied at last and our ideals realised even on earth, our duty here in the face of the everlasting problem cannot be to sit with folded hands waiting in patience, and resignation for the consummation to be, but rather to strive for it and work at it, with might and main, with all the earnestness, and faith and hope which the situation requires. What do we know of a former life? Does heredity or environment or even "the tyranny of actions" dispense with or nullify the effect of honest and persistent effort at amelioration? If the evil of one time and condition falls in a line with and even ends in good at another, how can it be said to be under a system of control, different from the rest of the world? How can it fail to be part and parcel of the same wise and beneficent economy of the universe which we daily and hourly feel and realise? Nay, the Power that endows man with his sense of right and wrong, with his

ideals and aspirations, his instincts and his enthusiasms cannot have doomed them all to failure and disappointment, nor have intended faith, hope and patience to feed on chimeras down to the end of time. Indeed, our very despairs are our awakenings. They bring us to a clear perception of the situation. We see the difficulties but discern a way out of them. On earth it is perpetual striving for the good and the true; in another life, it is the same unceasing effort but renewed under circumstances vastly different. The strife is perpetual, for the good itself is infinite.

Fitting ourselves for Life

Our associations, our love, our hatred, struggles, temptations, triumphs, defeats, dissipations, aspirations, intrigues, honesty and dishonesty all leave their autographs upon the window of the soul and are published and made known to the world. Black hearts, dark thoughts and evil passions cast their gloomy shadow upon the face which all the will power in the world cannot drive away. Across the face are depicted the dens of infamy, the scenes of dissipation, polluted companions, the strife of passions, the struggle of broken resolutions and the soreness of defeat. But what a radiance glorifies and makes sublime the faces of those who have overcome temptations, disciplined their powers in striving after self-improvement, sacrificed their lives for the good of others, lived for the glory of God and the love of their fellowmen. Everything that we do leaves its impressions on us, moulds our character and makes us better or worse fitted for the life that God has given us.

— V. Y. K.

Thoughtfulness and Piety

There are people who imagine that there is an antagonism between faith and thoughtfulness, and that a thoughtful view of the things around us is calculated to make men sceptical rather than devout. This we consider to be a wholly wrong view. It appears to us that frivolity of mind is likelier to produce scepticism than to nourish faith. The type of scepticism that we generally meet with, is not the honest doubt that is worth half the creeds, but the

unthinking materialism which is the result of a want of power to apprehend the inner meaning of the things and to see anything beyond or behind appearances.

Reflection is a valuable ally of faith and righteousness. The insignificance of fame or power, the evanescence of worldly things, the absolute helplessness of man without the loving protection of God, are all things which we can realise only by patient thoughtfulness. Then alone do we vividly feel our poverty, our isolation, the insufficiency of every thing but God for the longings of the soul, when we withdraw the mind from the distractions of life. And it is precisely because the pleasing illusions of life are cruelly dispelled by thought, that the frivolous are afraid to think. But those who persist in seeking the truth, and have the manliness not to be contented with little things, are rewarded with the discovery that beyond the things on which the shadow of death hovers, there are eternal realities to fulfil the aspirations of the soul.

Thoughtfulness is an aid to righteousness. We daily see about us the misery, shame and degradation produced by sin. We see how noble talents are paralysed, strong physical constitutions shattered, the sweetest relationships of life embittered by want of self-control. As we look back to our own past lives, we see that all other sufferings of life sink into nothingness in comparison with the torment of remorse, the consciousness of having disobeyed God, which makes it difficult for us to approach God in prayer. When we suffer any great bereavement, what makes the cup of sorrow most bitter is the thought that we have deserved to be chastised. And thus the testimony of our deepest experiences is clearly in favour of a righteous life. But it requires a reflective mind to meditate upon the lessons of the past, and to make them our guiding principles for the future.

The thoughtful believer draws hope and trust from things which to others appear meaningless. We all see how the fowls of the air are fed and the lilies of the field clothed, and there seems nothing instructive or inspiring in these simple facts to ordinary minds; but how profound is the significance which they had to the mind of Jesus! Can it be that the hand, the bounty of which fills nature with life and beauty will deny us the fulfilment of our needs? When we have the power to learn, the humblest things will have the power to

teach us the truths which we most need to know. Let us but open our eyes, and we shall find the universe full of God. We are oftener full of despair than of hope, but why should this be so? Will not He that giveth repose to our tired bodies after our daily toils, give rest to our weary souls? Surely He that provideth our daily bread, will provide for the hunger and thirst of the spirit. Let us be full of hope, then. God is himself the substance of the soul, and He will not deny himself to us. He that has taught us to thirst after infinite beauty and holiness, will give us His beauty to adore and His holiness to worship for ever. Every sacred desire shall be fulfilled.

How to attain Interior Life

1. *Great tenderness of conscience*, secured by constant regular and earnest confession to God, a hatred of all sin, imperfection, infidelity by calmly but resolutely fleeing every occasion of it.

2. *Great Purity of heart*, by detachment from all earthly things, wealth, luxuries, fame, kindred, friends, tastes, even life itselfnot that we need fail in love to our kindred and friends, but we must only let the thought of them abide in the heart as united to the love and thought of God.

3. *Great Purity of mind*, carefully excluding from it all useless, distracting thoughts as to past, present, or future, all pre-occupation over some pet employment, all desire to be known, and thought well of.

4. *Great Purity of action*, only undertaking what lies in the path of duty, controlling natural eagerness and activity, acting soberly, with the help of the Holy Spirit the thought that by our deeds we glorify God, pausing for a moment, when passing from one occupation to another, in order to direct aright the intention, and taking care to be always occupied in what is useful and beneficial.

5. *Great recollectedness and self-mortification*, avoiding, as much as we can in keeping with our social position, all dissipation bustle, disturbance, never allowing, voluntarily, useless desires, books, words, or pleasures but placing them under the rule of reason, decorum, edification and love, taking care that our prayers be said slowly and carefully, articulating each word, and trying to feel the truth of what we are saying.

6. *Great care and exactitude*, in all the ordinary actions of life, above all in the exercises of religion, leaving nothing to chance or hazard, beholding in everything God's overruling will and saying to oneself sometimes as the hour for such a duty arrives "I must hasten, God is calling me."

7. *Much intercourse with God*, speaking to Him with simplicity, loving Him dearly always consulting Him, rendering to Him an account of every action, thanking Him constantly, and above all, drawing near to Him. One great help towards such sweet communion with God, will be found in a steady perseverance in the early morning's meditation.

8. *Much love for our neighbour*, because he is the much loved child of God, praying for him, comforting, teaching, strengthening, and helping him in all difficulties.

The use of Prayer

There is one use of Prayer which ought never to be forgotten. It opens up the human heart to higher influences, and to greater forces. It puts the man in the receptive attitude which enables greater intelligences to help and the Divine life itself to enter into the human spirit, which has really opened its shutters to the light. Just as when the sun is shining, if you open your shutters the sun will shine into your room, so if you open the closed shutters of your mind and heart, divine love and light and life flow in, at the open window, and the spirit which opens itself to divinity is filled with divinity, not because divinity changes, but because the human vessel has been opened up to receive the flood of light. Therefore, whether they understand it or not, it matters not, it is good for man to pray. As soon as they understand the working, they can adopt other methods if they will; but so long as man exists, and mightier intelligences surround him for his helping, so long will the elder lead the younger, the greater help the lesser; and that mighty Father-heart, which has room for every grief and suffering, will send the love of His heart into those who open themselves to receive it; and thus prayers will ever be used by those, who know the higher experiences of spiritual life.

—Annie Besant.

In the Spiritual World

People talk of the other world. It is something of which those who speak have little idea; for it is to be discovered after the present mortal coil is dissolved. Be that as it may. By "Spiritual World" we do not mean that world. It is the world we find here and now. It is a world, we suppose, we know. But to make it spiritual the point of view must undergo a change. We must close the eye constantly looking out for external pleasure, happiness or power; we say, external for as long as the prevailing angle of vision persists, these things which ought to be internal and belong to the soul, are sought as some foreign objects to which we hold with all our might, for they are always trying to escape our grip. Having thus withdrawn the eye, the mind must ponder over our own selves, over what we are, whither we are tending, and what the ultimate result of it all is going to be. When we thus go to the soul, and realise that it is the true self and that we are to do what we can for its advancement and elevation, the change is complete, and the vision is transformed. It is, as it were, a new birth. To speak in the words of the economist it produces a change in the value of things. We shall continue to value things around us, not for the pleasing effects they produce, but for the good influence they exercise on our mind and heart. This world looked at from this angle of vision is what we call the spiritual world, a world that serves the growth of the spirit, and the assertion and realisation of the inner soul.

One-sided Development

Though there may be the possibility of the individual man growing to the perfection of his manhood, yet the actual fact is that in our present stage of development it requires all mankind to show what human nature is. Individuals are but partially developed, and one faculty is more strong and more active in one person than in another. No one man is all mankind's epitome. Thus it may be seen why the same man presents the picture of power and of weakness at the same time. I may go further and say that it does not seldom happen that one faculty in a given man's character monopolises all the energies of his nature, and in other respects leaves him a very imperfect creature indeed. Let me try and illustrate this.

I

There are men in the field of science who are veritable giants of intellect, so perfect, in the clearness of their apprehensions of the physical universe, and with such accuracy of description, that if they make a positive statement relating thereto it is accepted as a fact. And yet in matters pertaining to religion they are utterly wanting in apprehension, and consequently in appreciation. What to others of far less intellectual powers are well apprehended certainties, and the strength and joy of life, are to them but dreams of fancy.

How has this come about? In this way as it seems to me. The exclusive use of one or two faculties of the mind, allowing the rest to remain inactive, produces abnormal development and onesidedness. So that men eminent for scientific knowledge of a physical kind, when they come to judge anything outside the sphere of their attainments, are apt to apply the same rules and the same faculties, and are thus led on to false conclusions.

Onesidedness is not the monopoly of theologians. If they are apt to idealise too much, the exclusive devotees of physical science are apt to materialise too much. These men are devoted to their special studies—the physical nature with which they come in contact by their senses, and because they cannot reach what they are in search of by the same methods and instruments, they exclude from their experience the whole realms of fact and life as real as their own. They thus limit their field of experience, and cultivate only a part of their natures; and so are imperfect and onesided men.

Human beings cannot answer the end for which they come into the world with one side of their nature undeveloped and inactive, and that specially the higher side. Our admiration for vast intellectual development does not let us fall into contempt of others who do not manifest their powers, for much poorer mental gifts may be associated with virtues, and with insight into moral and spiritual realities, to which these abnormal giants may be strangers—giants who stand dumb before phenomena which are realities to others, but which to them seem but the phantasies of ignorance. The man whose whole energy of nature is absorbed by his intellect is but a limited being after all;

just as the man is, whose genius is so practical that he has no discernment of and no light in the beauties and graces of nature in her loveliest and most glorious scenes.

II

But one-sided development is poor in every way. Here is a man who is strictly conscientious; every energy of his nature dominated by the principle of justice. He would put everything to right by strict adjustment. But, somehow, when he gets all his own way, he seldom succeeds in giving satisfaction even to those most benefitted. Why is this? He represses the warmth of his sympathies lest they should interfere with his impartialities; so that he radiates no kindly influences around him that touch the heart, win the affections, and appeal to the imagination. A glorious virtue is justice, and were it universally practised half of the woes of the world would disappear. But when it stands alone in the character, it is sadly apt to degenerate into intolerance as a result of its intensity. Indeed, apart from width of mind and charity of disposition, it is rather liable to turn a man into a bigot than otherwise. In fact, the vice of hardness is seldom anything but the sense of justice uninterfused by sympathy and mercy; as the vice of want of righteous wrath with wrong is sympathy unrestrained by conscience. But be that as it may, the bigot is a co-worker with evil even when he intends to be on the side of God; he is narrow and over-bearing because he believes that he is acting on the side of Eternal Righteousness. Thus may evil result from the energy and activity of a Godlike virtue, when it works separately and apart from its correlative and balancing virtue.

III

Nay, if we take the highest virtue of which a human being is capable it is much the same. I mean the virtue of self-sacrifice. To him who has this religious spirit with him the joy of others is more than his own, and their sorrows smite into oblivion any sufferings that come to himself. He is willing to give up not only what he possesses but himself to the service of mankind, if he may but alleviate their woes, lessen their sins and add to their virtue and joy. The radiant and refreshing benevolence of such men is truly divine. It is almost a redemption in itself to be in contact with it.

and to catch by sympathy of soul the contagion of a holy passion. But sometimes this grand passion acts like Aron's rod, swallowing up the rods of other magicians: so the virtues of social life, the holy passion for domestic life, and all the graces that adorn the lives of ordinary men and women are absorbed and made of no account by this one passion of the soul. Prudence is banished from action, foresight from courses of conduct, and evil is wrought where the mind is bent on nothing but good.

IV

Another individual has a vital and persistent piety. He loves to be alone with the Great Lover of souls, and to be in conscious contact with His spirit of holiness, or to pray in company with his fellowmen; and whether individually or socially all devout exercises and contemplation are a delight to him. Such a passion kindling in a man's soul is a glory that helps to make him divine; in its expansive energy it enlarges his mind; in its inward quickening it purifies the affections of the heart; in its upward swells it lifts the character to glorious heights, and opens the vision to a clear discernment of spiritual realities. Nay, it helps to give a penetration into the moral meaning of the world which no intellectual keenness can ever rival.

Such intuitions are more powerful than arguments, or knowledge which comes through the senses or the understanding, for intuition is direct perception. And there are men who are so finely developed on the soul-side of their nature that their intuition of God is as clear as the physical vision of the physical world, and communion with Him is the one great delight of life. But it not seldom happens that they are deficient in the counterbalancing powers of reason and common sense, deficient in worldly sagacity, and in the actual business of life are entirely unpractical. The whole energy of their nature is absorbed in the spiritual faculty. In old days the forest and mountain solitudes of the East, the monastery and nunnery of the West, were filled by those who thought it religious to fly from home and social duties, who refused to have anything to do with fatherhood and motherhood or who abandoned wife and children, who despised patriotic duty, and did not hesitate to leave all these obligations to the worst elements of society. For however glorious it may be the onesided development is sure to lead to mischief.

Almost all human beings are but partially developed, and each and all need more and more to aim at a fuller and completer development of the faculties of the being. They need to look back to the past for lessons of experience, around for lessons of patience, and upward to the Soul and Centre of all for help and guidance. What good is there in valour if it is simply the rush of rashness? Or in prudence if it is the promoting of fear? Or in mental power if it shuts out of sight spiritual realities? Or in piety itself if it becomes so absorbed in the future that it fails in its duty to the present; or in its contemplation of heaven if it forgets that earth is the time-sphere of practical work which is to train the soul for its work through eternity?

—*Rev. S. Fletcher Williams.*

A True Devotee

To ordinary people, the world is a place of happiness. Their aim in life is to secure it by the acquisition of material things. Things thus become the end and men the means of attaining them, or rivals in possessing them. All natural gifts and acquired possessions are regarded as privileges to which no responsibilities are attached. To abstain from committing positive wrongs is to be virtuous. Self-complacency joined to a sense of superiority over erring fellowmen is the prevailing attitude of mind. Far different is the view of life and of the world held by a real devotee. To him, it is not a place of happiness, but of discipline and duty. His aim is to make the will of God his own and regulate his life accordingly. Trials and temptations are occasions to purify his heart and draw him to God. Being a sinner himself needing forgiveness, he is ready to forgive the sins of others. He knows that God himself is patient with sinners and respects their autonomy, waits to rouse their will to good. How can man be less generous? Humble in spirit, loving and serving all, full of compassion for the erring, he makes his life a journey from good to better, thence to best. Such outlook on life and the spirit in which it is lived, it is not easy to attain. It is primarily a work of self-discipline to which grace may in time be added.

—*V. G. B.*

Types of Religion

As mind is a unit so all of its attributes are units. There is only one kind of love, hate, fear, reverence, joy, kindness or sympathy in the whole of humanity. Every faculty that has been credited to men is a unit. These powers and qualities of the mind are, however, of many varying degrees. Seldom do two persons possess the same power or quality in equal degrees of perfection. So with morals and religion. There is only one religion and one morality when we have reduced them to the lowest or last terms in our analysis of them. Co-extensive with human thought upon itself and the nature about it is that which we name religion. Different individuals and nations or races, have held it in varying measures. Different ages have seen the same nations or races hold it in different degrees of perfection or fulness. Sectarian, narrow-minded, ignorant and even some intelligent people have often said, "These are different religions." These are not religions, but religion showing itself in such forms as the accidents of life or the choices of men determine. Such are but types of that single religious force in life that we recognise as universal.

Religion then is a unit, but it does not always manifest itself in the same degree or manner, or custom. I am not concerned to find one form of religion an absolutely true religion, and every other form a false religion to be overthrown. Our real concern should be the relative value of all forms or types, that we should be able to determine what would be the best type of religion for us to-day under the circumstances of our lives. What was a valuable type for men of hundreds or thousands of years ago, for men of primitive or ancient times under other conditions of life, is no criterion for us to determine our religious life of to-day under conditions so different from theirs, by higher civilisation, and by a general enlightenment upon all things that influence and mould the character of the people.

Religion expresses itself in terms of faith, worship and economy. These however, are not of its essence. These are variable. They are always changing. They are, in their changes, what the causes of change, whether internal and controllable by us, or external and uncontrollable, determine. These, though religion's lowest terms of expression, are constant ones. Theology, which is an interpretation of the ideas involved in those terms,—faith, worship and ceremony provides new and higher channels through which they may expres

themselves, and guides them towards what are conceived to be the most worthy objects,—morals, love, purity, honour, righteousness.

It is when religion is drawn above the stage of faith, worship and ceremony to deal with the motives and aims of theology, and with the reasons for them, that it becomes modified into types. The type must be named according to the prevailing features it presents to the observant mind which seeks to classify and generalise its facts in order to use them in building character. In this slight and sketchy article I can mention only a few of the prevailing types.

1. The Faith Religion:—In some lives simple, unquestioning, and unenlightened trust in the prevailing power of mind. It is appealed to so strongly that it “believes all things, hopes all things” until the power of discrimination is broken down, and the character becomes credulous, believing a tradition to be synonymous with a law of God, venerable folly to be preferable to “new-fangled” wisdom. Its guiding principle is, “as it was in the beginning, so it must be now and for ever.”

2. The Religion of Worship:—The disposition to reverence is so strong in some minds—and God forbid that I should weaken it in any mind—that everything in religion is sacrificed for the manner or form of its devotion. Its ascriptions of praise become mere sounding brass or tinkling cymbal; its songs and devotion mere sentimental excitements or æsthetic emotionalisms that bear no relations of agreement to one’s knowledge of himself or of the God whom he professes to honour. Its ordinances and sacrifices do not touch character and produce daily integrity—they are ends, not means.

3. The Religion of Creed:—It aims to classify and couch all knowledge in one statement. It makes everything secondary to a theory, and soon loses sight of everything else. Once satisfied with it as a complete statement of knowledge the mind refuses to grow because it wants no new facts, craves no new ideas, aspires after no larger outlook. It refuses them altogether and becomes stationary, for it has exhausted the treasury of God, and has attained the end of all perfection.

4. The Religion of Sect:—The love of power, honour and preference is so strong in some minds that all their energies are bent to the one end of gathering about them a multitude of men, and of

providing a great wealth of instrumentalities to overcome every other body of people. Such love of sect leads to the abuse of every virtue of religion.

5. The Religion of Righteousness:—The moral sense, if stimulated by wisdom and inspired by worthy objects, sets our religious feelings and convictions to their highest account in putting right conduct foremost, and above everything else in religion. As character is the highest and most important thing of life, it follows that the type of religion that most aids in forming character is the highest of them all. Whether there will be good in intellectual belief, in worship, emotion, creed, sect, or opinions—all these are temporary and must fail unless they contribute to the formation of character.

These various expressions of religion, to be of real value should lead to something inclusive of them all. That one inclusive attainment, that one highest human attainment, what is it? It is purity of heart and righteousness of life, true character. It is love to God manifested, attested, embodied day by day, in unwearying service to man. It is uprightness of life. It is the Word Made Flesh, and dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. "If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" This is the type or form of religion we seek to cultivate. We put it above everything else. That men are saved, not by ecstasies, visions, raptures of emotion, doctrines, rituals, ceremonies, sacraments, but by character, by straight and pure and holy living,—this is our supreme word, our creeds. Is not this the religion everywhere needed to-day?

—*Rev. S. Fletcher Williams.*

Purified Faith

It is faith rid of all influences of ignorance and superstition. The faith that seeks the salvation of the soul by bathing in the waters of the Ganges is the faith of superstition and ignorance. It is the faith that seeks to purify the inner man by cleaning his outer garment, that is, his body. Tukaram wants us to turn the search-light inwards. He wants us to dive deep into the innermost recesses of our hearts and find out what our defects of character are. And having discovered them he wants us to make an earnest effort to

mend them. This is what he means when he exhorts us first to purify faith and then go on doing our duty in the world, whatever that might be. He wants us in the first place to give up "the life of worldly acquiescence, of selfish habit, of unloving and barren ease."

Modern Meditations

1. The rising sun invites me to meditation and praise. He has entered upon his daily routine and bids me take up mine. Fresh is my mind, and restored are my energies. The air is balmy and alive with the notes of numerous awakened creatures. Safe was I from harm during the helpless hours of sleep, thanks to the services of countless beings, which brought into existence the castle that sheltered me. May the Source of all blessings enable me to spend the day in the service of the world, and may this be to me a pleasure, no less than a duty, an avenue to the temple of God!

2. The grateful sages of old worshipped the Spirit of the Earth, the Lord of Day, and the Queen of Night. The purple hill, the winding stream, the crested wave, the fleecy cloud, the fragrant flower, the nourishing fruit, the majestic elephant, the benign cow, the twittering sparrow, the industrious bee, the smiling babe, the devoted mother, the toiling rustic, the ingenious artisan—these make the earth a heaven, the only heaven of which we have experience. May we be thankful for our transient existence therein, and rejoice in trying to cure its imperfections—in reducing pain, removing ignorance, in promoting good and combating evil, as dutiful servants of the invisible Master!

3. The moralist bids me conquer the six enemies. They were intended to be my friends. I forfeit their support and I incur their hostility. It is given to me to make as many foes or friends as I like, and my conquest shall consist in not making any enemies at all. Sensuality is the perversion of a necessary instinct; anger is courage without coolness; infatuation is extravagant love; greed is excessive self-love; pride is the milk of joy and satisfaction which has turned sour; envy is a debased aspiration for equality. By desiring happiness, by overcoming resistance, and by rejoicing in success, I am expected to help forward the scheme under which I

live. May I dutifully appreciate the value of these instincts and make them serviceable to myself and my fellow-beings !

4. The firmament is alive with the movements of stars, innumerable as the sand by the sea-shore. The sun, who is a more than a million times larger than the earth, dances about still larger bodies as the mote dances in his own beams. Inconceivable is the power manifested in the universe, and complicated beyond comprehension is its structure. Yet the distant orbs are to us pictures of beauty and modesty, and we contemplate them as a child contemplates the pendants of its cradle. May the starry abode of the Supreme Being ever delight my reverent eye ! May our souls twinkle with pure rays in the firmament of humanity, receive constant light from Him and afford guidance to others !

5. Mysterious is the mind of man, so closely connected with his body, and yet so distinct therefrom. We know not its source, nor do we know its destiny. It assimilates the food obtained through the senses, it grows, it decays. It is genius, it is virtue, it is love. It is free and yet under the influence of motives, it controls and is yet controlled. No gift is more precious, none more delicate. May this mysterious part of my constitution be alert and yet staid, strong and yet tender, obedient to the Spirit of Righteousness, and intent upon work, meditation and service !

6. Heavy is my indebtedness and innumerable are my creditors. I am not solvent, for I cannot discharge my obligations in full. I cannot pretend to be charitable, for I can give only what I have received. I have earned nothing except by means of what was given to me by others. The food which gave me the strength to work was produced and brought to me by the labour of myriads. Wonderful is the constitution of society. It makes the child a dictator, it secures to the beggar the services of countless workmen. May the Bestower of all blessings ever stand before me and remind me of my obligations and my stewardship, so that I may ever consecrate my soul, my strength and my substance to His service ! —H. N. R.

Why should we go to Church

Men ought to attend Church, because there, more and better than anywhere else, they are brought face to face with the ideal side of life by those whose position frees them of suspicion of ulterior and

selfish purposes. Our time is absorbingly secular and commercial. It is occupied with the things that are seen. It has little interest in anything which cannot be written in an inventory. But there is another sphere and one which has most to do with moulding human affairs. Men are always like their ideals. Largeness and nobility of character and manhood—ability to rise above losses and to be brave in the face of suffering and disappointment require that the lines of communication between ourselves and the high sphere which concerns things not seen and ideal should be kept open.

The Church with all its mistakes—its occasional narrowness, its controversies over unimportant questions—constantly and consistently insists that character is more than fame or wealth; that he who gets riches, but is not righteous, is a failure; and it never allows a man to forget that he must reckon with the unseen. The Church compels men to face the moral order of the world, which is as evident and as remorseless as the physical order. If they say they believe not in God.....it still remains true that righteousness is the loftiest of ideals; that all are in a moral order from which none can escape, and that those who do right may be happy, while those who do wrong will surely suffer. It is the part of wisdom to consider these facts. After all qualifications have been made, it is beyond reasonable question that the church is the best interpreter of the ideal character and of the moral order, and the only institution which must keep them in the forefront or be false to itself.

We should say, therefore, "Attend Church that you may worship God, that you may learn of the things of the spirit; that you may be brought face to face with the doctrine of grace; which in hours of deepest need alone can satisfy either the mind or the heart." If you answer "I believe in none of these things," then we reply "Attend Church that you may hear the loftiest ideals presented by those who have no selfish ends to subserve and that you may be kept sensitive to the moral order of the world in which all men are included, the violation of which means ruin and misery and harmony with which is followed by benefit and blessing."

The Heart of God

God loved, and creation began. Chaos bloomed into cosmos, darkness kindled into light, the world teemed with the marvels of

existence. All beauty, all charm, all the resplendent glory of creation bespeak God's love. The river, with its fertilising stream, distributes health and plenty, the mountain knits the earth into habitable firmness, the sun bestows the day, the moon cools the heat thereof. All things are a witness unto the compassion of the Divine bosom. Man is in everlasting search of the Infinite Heart—of the Heart that is joying and grieving with humanity. Religion is primarily an affection's need, an unquenchable thirst of our mysterious nature. It is only when the Over-Heart rules us, it is only when we feel that by our sin we sadden the great God, nay, it is only when there is a clear heart-communication between God and us that we are lifted above temptation. God's tender mercy has found expression through saints and prophets. Religion is a joy when it reveals the Eternal Sympathy, and sheltered therein we are secure like the child linked to mother's gentle breast.

God is Love

Oh, the soul of this Universe, Oh, the Lord of creation, in this world we sometimes find cities laid low : peoples destroyed by epidemics ; trees and buildings pulled down by storm, hurricane and earthquake ; whole villages and towns swallowed up by floods and torrential rains ; or human beings dying by their thousands in famine and drought. In such hours of crisis Thou, Oh Lord, seemest to us like the destroyer, hurling his thunderbolt at us. But it is, just then, that understanding the laws of creation and consulting the experiences of the soul within, we must realise more intimately than ever, that Thou art our kind Father, our loving Mother, and the shelter and refuge of us all. We cannot associate Thy manifestation with the ravaging phenomena of Nature, either in space or time. From time immemorial Thou art leading the universe into grooves of ordered change. Thou art making its face beautiful, its purpose pure, and its end beneficial.

Science has been revealing to us this universe, in an increasing measure, as Thy glory and Thy wonder. So even these terrible experiences and cataclysms in nature, we must learn to look upon as ministering to that great end. These do not show Thy grace less ; Thy love in any way diminished ; and Thy protection withheld from man. We feel disturbed in mind ; we are stricken with fear. We

cannot deny that they give us pain. But let us, in such moments of unrest and doubt, learn to know Thy infinite power, Thy mysterious dispensation, and Thy foresight. Let us trust Thy omniscience, Thy boundless mercy and Thy love which understands all. Let these sights impress upon us Thy Majesty, and fill us with reverence and awe.

Thy will be done. This faith should deepen in us and also that the will is for the blessing of us all. Let these ordeals make us meek and reveal to us our utter helplessness. How puny we mortals are before the mighty forces of Nature, which is but Thy manifestation! Let the thought induce in us a mood to strive and look upwards ever to Thee. Difficulties and trials of life, its sorrows and baffling situations are meant by Thee, Oh Lord, to make us understand one another better and bring us in closer bonds of service and love. Hence let us never think of these visitations as a scourge. In Thy kingdom, there is nothing like wanton cruelty or wicked waste. Abiding in this faith, and casting our burden on Thee entirely, let us live and walk in the fear of Thee, which is both wisdom and Love. This, Oh Lord, is the benediction we seek of Thee. —R. G. B.

Despair Not

The laws of spiritual evolution in man are very intricate. No body can ascertain the ways of Providence in bringing the message of salvation to man. Different persons have to pass through different circumstances of life and to encounter different kinds of difficulties in order to effect the progress of their inner life. There are men, very few in number, who are spiritually disposed from their very birth and who glide steadily along on favourable tides towards the wished for goal. But the majority of mankind have to pass through unnumbered trials and temptations. There are moments in life when everything seems to contribute to spiritual growth, every circumstance of life seems to be favourable to the religious life; there again are moments in life when a man is hemmed in on all sides by untoward circumstances, when he is tossed on the ocean of life, carried hither and thither by the waves of unexpected trials and is often driven to utter despair. The ways of spiritual progress are not smooth but very slippery. There are ups and downs in life more

numerous than in a hilly track. When the first ray of spiritual life dawns upon the mind of a man ; when a man immersed in arrant worldliness suddenly rises up from spiritual stupor ; when perhaps a line of a song, a commonplace word, or an ordinary circumstance of life strikes his spiritual chord and awakens the dormant feelings that lay asleep for years and years, at that happy moment everything pours forth sweetness into his heart. He finds himself as if in a new world ; a new view of life opens before him ; everything seems to be imbued with spirituality and a new life dawns upon his mental horizon. He sings and prays and finds himself elevated, transformed and transfigured. The old ways have changed. The vicious habits have disappeared and he finds himself a new man free from the vices he has so long been addicted to. But as he advances in life, this first outburst of sweet feelings disappears and he finds himself face to face with stern realities. He finds that the germs of sin have not yet been rooted out, he is every day surrounded by new trials and new difficulties which he tries to but cannot overcome. The sweetness of life vanishes. The inner passions seem to threaten every moment the very existence of his spiritual life. The odds are very many against him and every day he loses his ground. He seeks sympathy from others but finds coldness and indifference. None comes forward to help him at this stage of life. He cries, he prays, but receives no response. Every day new clouds darken his path to righteousness. He finds no rest, no peace. "Society, friendship and love, divinely bestowed upon man" in order to sweeten his life in moments of struggle, to uplift him in moments of utter despair, all seem to him bitter and pungent. And in these breathless struggles, when he finds nobody to help him, he is often tempted to give himself up for lost and forsake the ways of God. He is often led to think that there is no use waging a perpetual warfare against sins and iniquities. The worldly men are enjoying the sweets of this life ; but why should he, a servant of God, be denied even a few moments of rest ? Why should he be given up to innumerable temptations ? Does not God hear his prayers ? Is he too insignificant a creature to attract His attention ? Such are the thoughts that disturb him and often lead him to forsake the paths of religion. Such is the state of things with many of us. Many of us are struggling, and struggling without any appreciable success against the temptations of life. This moment we make a resolution and the next moment we break it.

All our attempts seem to go for nothing against the temptations that threaten to swallow us up. And we are often led to think that there is no end of this struggle. It is as hopeless a task to get over these temptations of life as to count the waves of the ocean. In these critical moments of life, moments of struggle between hope and despair, between God and the Devil, it is of the utmost importance to look to the process of the growth of spirituality in the minds of those who brought about new eras in the religious world. These struggles are but stepstones to eternal peace. These trials are not peculiar to us, but all who are hankering after spiritual life have to go through the same experiences. Even Buddha and Chaitanya, Christ and Mahomet, had to fight with Satan, the Devil, or *Mara*. Let every one remember that there is peace after war, a perpetual sunshine after clouds of darkness. It is necessary that we should wait patiently and depend upon the mercy of God. --I. M.,

Spiritual Life

"The spiritual life becomes quickly odious if you preach nothing else. It is not the theorist who is most faithful; it is the man who quietly lives. The more truly spiritual, the less you hear from him about spirituality. The spiritual man is so little inclined to parade his highest sentiments that you must draw him out, you must study his conduct. For genuine spirituality is an almost unconscious accompaniment of the life of service, the growth of peace, the dominion of love.

The spiritual is not an end to be sought in itself, as if there were a spiritual quality or realm distinct from every other. The ideal is to lift all conduct, purify all thought, carry the higher consciousness into everything. The spiritual realm which we are in touch with is in deepest truth, the creative life of all planes. There is no point where the spiritual ceases and somewhat else begins.

The tendency of the spiritual devotee in all ages has been towards the acceptance of a narrow segment of the great whole of life. The same tendency is strong today. The spiritual is still put off in a vague, abstract realm by itself. The zealot scorns the external, the physical, the social, or the artistic, as if he could cheat

the universe and become spiritual by disregarding instead of including these. And so we find him maimed, lame, or ugly."

—*Horatis W. Dresser.*

Our Past and Future (1)

Saint Tukaram Says:—

"Let what has drifted past you, go, only take care of what is left and think on the Merciful One at least now. The life that is left us for the thought of God, spend it not on the things of this world. Away with this disrelish. I beseech you all, just for a moment harken unto me. What have I got to do with thus speaking unto you, but that God lays it upon me so to do?" This like so many of Tukaram's utterances is worth pondering over. Those, who have not at all lived to noble purpose the life that they have hitherto lived, or certainly not the whole of it, are here earnestly exhorted to do so at least in future. And which of us can lay his hand to his heart and say that he has always lived his life as nobly as he could? If we be but impartial towards ourselves, each one of us, we are afraid, would have to own, that he has fallen immeasurably short of doing that. But the future is yet before us, though the past is beyond recall. If that at least could be saved, however short it be, that would be something gained. Let therefore the dead past bury its dead and look to the future. Let not the ghost of the past overshadow it.

There are ways in which the remembrance of the waste of our past lives affects us so as to come in the way of our making the best of what is left. "Ten have gone and only five are left," we say, as the Marathi proverb has it, and cease to care. The sailors in a shipwreck make straight for the wine stores that they may not have to sink with their mouths dry. And so do we in this matter. It is not rarely the case that the very thoughts that ought to make one serious, ought to impel us to do deeds that smell of heaven are made to serve as excuses for deeds of quite the contrary character. In a poem of Tennyson's a miser excuses himself from alms-giving on the ground of the shortness of life. He says it is not worth while his giving alms and the beggar's enjoying it, life being so short.

Or we may be so sore about our past, that it would always continue to haunt us and leave us no rest. Without a break our mind would be harping upon it and the rest of our days would be spent wholly in mournfully ruminating over it and doing nothing else.

Thus either in one way or the other, as if not content with the part we have lost, we seem bent upon doing our best to lose the whole. The ape in a Buddhist birth-story having accidentally let fall a grain of pea threw away in the search for it, we are told, all the peas it had in its mouth and hands. Its conduct was laughable, and so would ours be, were it not that the issues in our case are so very serious.

Or the failure to improve the past while it was in our power to do so might cause in us a distrust of ourselves and we may be thoroughly bereft of the energy and self-confidence so very necessary to help us in turning over a new leaf.

These are the reasons why we need deeply the exhortation Tukaram addresses us in the text. Otherwise in a way most of us do let the dead past bury its dead, in as much as they very rarely give a thought to how they have spent their past or to drawing any lessons for the future therefrom. Such utter carelessness as to one's past Tukaram would never advise. It is to those who from thinking on the past would be rendered reckless as to the future, or whose energies would be damped, or who would do nothing but think on the past that he means to say:—

“Look not mournfully into the past. It comes not back again, wisely improve the future. It is yours. Go forth to meet it with a manly heart.” He further tells us how it is to be improved. It is not to be spent on the things of this world. It must primarily be used towards the thought and service of God. For that is its proper use and one can be said to take proper care of his life only when he puts it to its proper use. The effort to approach and serve God rightly, it is true, is a very hard one and seems to be attended with hardly any success. But give it not up. It would be right to do so, if it were certain that there is nothing gained. But there is gain even if it be not very perceptible. Every single effort to do right must by its nature leave its impress on the soul and to that extent you must become the better for it. That is the only way in which

will be destroyed by God's grace your *samchita*, the force of previous habit in you, the impress on your soul of your former life, the galling yoke of which even Tukaram owns elsewhere.

There is another point worthy of notice, in the text. Tukaram proceeds to exhort us, he says, because he thinks it a duty laid upon him to do so. Whenever God imparts any truth to any of his creature, in that very fact, He lays upon that individual the duty to communicate at any cost the truth to his less fortunate brethren and to try to impress it on their minds. The person chosen may not be an orator, he may not think himself possessed of the eloquence necessary to speak in a manner worthy of the high trust and to make people see the truth, he may be ignorant. Yet all the same there is the duty laid upon him and he must faithfully discharge it to the best of his powers and the rest is no concern of his. At the same time he must do it because it is God's command and not from any other interested motive.

Accumulation of Vital Surplus

There should be a keen sense of enjoyment of all life's activities. As William James once said, simply to live, move and breathe should be a delight. The thoroughly healthy person is full of optimism; "he rejoiceth like a strong man to run a race." We seldom see such vitality except among children. When middle life is reached, or before, our vital surplus has usually been squandered. Yet it is in this vital surplus that the secret of personal magnetism lies. Vital surplus should not only be safe-guarded, but accumulated. It is the balance in the savings bank of life. Our health ideals must not stop at the avoidance of invalidism, but should aim at exuberant and exultant health. They should not savour of valetudinarianism but of athletic development. Our aim should be not to see how much strain our strength can stand but how great to make that strength. With such an aim we shall incidentally and naturally, find ourselves accomplishing more work than if we aimed directly at the work itself. Moreover when such ideals are attained, work instead of turning into drudgery tends to turn into play, and the hue of life seems to turn from dull grey to the bright tints of well-remembered childhood. In short, our health-ideals should rise from the mere wish to keep out

of a sick-bed to an eagerness to become a well-spring of energy. Only then can we realize the intrinsic wholesomeness, beauty, holiness and responsibility of human life. Body is the temple of God and it must not only be made beautiful and clean, but strong and lasting in order that the soul within may function better and shine brighter. Our health-ideals must attain the sanctity and imperative-ness of our moral ideals.

—*President Taft.*

The Theistic View of Affliction

Calamities occur often which astonish one by their apparently purposeless cruelty. Such an instance is a railway accident which cuts off several lives. It seems impossible to a human being to bear such calamities without impatience. Some will explain it as being due to Fate or Destiny. But, that explanation is not open to a Theist. It is hardly, in fact, an explanation at all. It is simply a suppression of reason, whereas, the very reason for the existence of Theism, is that reason may be applied to all phenomena and their meaning investigated in a spirit of reverence. When I speak of reason, I do not mean only the thin, objective reason which recognises and is satisfied by only objective evidence, but the larger reason which considers the higher instincts of our nature, to be as much a proof of truth as evidence, resting on visible, palpable, outside fact. It is the function and mission of Theism to apply such a reason to the world of phenomena, and to apply it boldly, freely and unflinchingly. We cannot satisfy ourselves by saying that Fate did this or that. Theism does not aim at deadening our emotions, least of all the sacred and sanctifying emotion of grief. Grief, indeed, has often led persons to their first insight into the Deity. Has it not been said :—

*Who never his bread in sorrow ate,
And through the lonely midnight hours,
Musing on his bed hath sate,
He knows ye not, ye Heavenly Pow'rs !*

Theism wants us to be human first and last. We are not to forego our affections and sympathies, but rather to feel them in a keener degree than others. The doctrines of Fate and Illusion have destroyed the heart of India. The mission of Theism is to revive it.

Here, let me say that the mission of a religion is determined by the history and national character of the people among whom it has to spread. In England or America for instance, Theism would set itself to moderate and soften the exuberant energies of the race, and to turn them away from improper channels. In India, it has first to create energy, to break down the shackles of superstition which bind down the limbs of the nation, and to rouse us all to a sense of duty. Now, action is always the result of feeling. You can never argue yourself into action. It is when argument ends, that action begins. Our emotions constitute the great driving-power of our lives. So Theism with its mission of arousing energy among us cannot afford to throw away its principal weapon—the great, primal emotions of the human heart. What it does, however, is to give us a whole view of the Universe, so that, feeling the full emotional life as well as the intellectual and physical life of humanity, we yet are able to see them in their true proportion to the whole, and are not led away by them to despair. The educative value of emotions remains with us; but it is deprived of its power to intoxicate and overwhelm. Religion, in another way too, helps us in our attitude towards affliction. It fills us with an ardour of love, life becomes a perpetual pursuit after good, and, as we all know, the soldier does not feel his wound in the heat of battle. The greatest lesson religion teaches us is how to bear suffering, how to destroy suffering and not allow it to destroy us. It has been observed by a cynical philosopher that mankind knows how to bear adversity, but what it does not know is how to bear prosperity. There is just a shade of truth in the observation; but as a rule prosperity needs very little bearing. But to be afflicted and yet ardent, to suffer and yet be sincere and sinless, to bear grief without repining, injustice without anger, to endure trials and tribulation with cheerful faith in our fellow-creatures—this is the gift of the few only and it comes of God.

—K. N.

Inheritance of the Past

The process of growth is always slow, where it has to be a sure growth. The best natures naturally want to shorten the long process in their desire to achieve the work of a century in a decade. This temptation has to be resisted, and in this respect the teachings of the evolution doctrine have great force, because they teach that growth

is structural and organic, and must take slow effect in all parts of the organism and cannot neglect any, and favour the rest. There are those amongst us who think that, in this connection, the work of the reformer is confined only to a brave resolve to break with the past, and do what our individual reason suggests as proper and fit. The power of long-formed habits and tendencies is however ignored in this view of the matter. The true reformer has not to write on a clean slate. His work is more often to complete the half-written sentence. He has to produce the ideal out of the actual, and by the help of the actual. We have one continuous stream of life flowing past us, and we must accept as valid the acts which were noted as valid in the past and on the principles of the past, and seek to turn the stream with a gentle bend here, and a gentle bend there, to fructify the land; we cannot afford to damn it altogether, or force it into a new channel. It is this circumstance which constitutes the moral interest of the struggle, and the advice so frequently given—that we have only to shake our bonds free and they will fall of themselves—is one which matured and larger experience seldom supports. We cannot break with the past altogether; with our past we should not break altogether, for it is a rich inheritance, and we have no reason to be ashamed of it.

—M. G. R.

Revelation of God to the Human Soul

Modern Science and Philosophy have brought about great changes in the conception of God and in His dealings with men. The revelation of God was not confined to particular races of mankind. He revealed Himself to all nations. In ancient times people believed that particular nations were specially favoured by God and God loved their friends and hated their enemies. Hence there was war between different nations on earth. They did not read the literature and sacred books of other nations and consequently they were ignorant of the fact that the same Almighty Father revealed Himself to all nations alike and religious truths are the common property of all. In the modern age, the study of the scriptures of different nations has brought home to the minds of all that God works everywhere and reveals His truths to all nations alike.

Another truth we have learnt in the modern age is that God not only revealed Himself in ancient times and only to a chosen few, but He reveals Himself even to-day and to every man who hankers after spiritual life. He manifests Himself in all things animate or inanimate. The conception of Heaven somewhere above the sky, where God lives and whence He acts through agents, is ridiculous. We are not required to propitiate Him by performing rites and ceremonies. We pray to Him not to appease His anger nor to propitiate Him, but for the elevation of our own souls. Our prayers and devotions are but the attempts on our part to approach God in the hope that He will help us in our struggles for attaining spiritual life. He is always with us though we know it not. The selfish cannot understand and appreciate what is kindness. No man can understand the perpetual love of God until he attains a certain degree of the divine nature. In proportion a man becomes divine, He understands the working of God in Him. Modern Science also tells us that God is not at the further extremity of the chain of cause and effect; but He is immanent in every thing material or immaterial, in every phenomenon of this universe. This is a great revelation of the modern age that God reveals Himself even now to every man that hankers after Him. He revealed not only to particular prophets of old or to particular nations, but to men of all ages and climes. This brings us a message of hope. He embraces all of us in His loving fold whether we see Him or not. He is ready to help us in all our struggles after righteousness. No earnest effort will go in vain; because He sees every thing. Let us realise this idea and feel His presence in everything we do.

Benoyendra Nath Sen

When I come to analyse what attracted me so much towards this 'unknown' friend, it was the combination of two factors. On the one hand, there was the clear outshining love for India which made him able to interpret truly to others of a different race the spirit of India as it is represented and embodied in her own wonderful history. I used to feel that spirit present in his writings as a living reality and could understand it and appreciate it at its true value. When he spoke of the spirituality of the East, it was not a vague phrase including all sorts of things that are not really spiritual.



Benoyendra Nath Sen

at all. It was not, further, a boastful phrase, in his case, made with a hasty assumption of superiority. On the contrary, it was spoken of, with awe and reverence and humility, as a gift from God which India had come near to losing altogether, both in the past and in the present, on account of national folly and sin. His faith was strong and clear that this treasure had not been wholly lost; that in our own days it had begun to shine again with a new lustre: that its use and service was not for India alone but for the world. But this faith of his was all the more impressive, because it was humble and penitent, and without a touch of Pharisaism. It was this humility and simplicity of his faith, which I found had been most noticed and appreciated during his tour in the West by those who heard him.

The second point that attracted me was that he appeared to understand the true greatness of the West. He did not pay empty compliments to Western 'superiority' in respect of science and industrial development and other things which often only make the mind sad to hear emphasised at the expense of moral greatness; but he pointed us back to the true service of all nobility in the West, such as it is, namely, the Cross of Christ. He faithfully warned us to hold fast to the message of the Cross, and not to forget that message amid the growing comforts and luxuries of modern life. He spoke as one who understood us and wished to help us to be true to the best that was in us. He seemed in a word, to *know* us—to know our best selves and to encourage us.

In this way he became, in the very highest sense of the word, a true peace-maker—one of those rare souls who can understand different temperaments and explain them one to another in love. What a supreme quality of love there is behind such peace-making—the love that 'thinketh no evil vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up'—only those can fully appreciate who have tried to walk along the pathway of reconciliation which he followed, and have been misunderstood for doing so by both sides in turn.

A further point that was made clear to me in conversation with his pupils and friends was his intense moral earnestness,—the way in which his whole soul went out into his work of teaching and instructing the young and leading them forward on the path of sacrifice. 'Nothing is fruitful but sacrifice' said the great Mazzini,

and the words might have been made a text for all Benoyendra Nath's inspiration which his pupils received. 'Nothing is fruitful but sacrifice.' The words are easily uttered but not easily lived; and the greatness of Benoyendra Nath's teaching was this, that the words were lived. The last illness, with all its dark atmosphere of suffering and pain, was lighted up with a radiance not of this world, with a brightness which no earthly faith can give. It proved that the teacher of moral truths was himself a learner. 'Now I *begin* to be a disciple' said Ignatius of Antioch, when his own martyrdom was before him. Truly the suffering of Benoyendra Nath's last days was itself a martyrdom, a bearing of the cross; and it sealed with his own blood the witness to moral truth which his whole life set forward. For the brightness and patience and peace and calm which he exhibited, showed the true spirit of the hero, which his pupils had instinctively felt in days of bodily health and prosperous circumstance.

In the great humanity of the future, when East and West shall be re-united in religious fellowship, Benoyendra Nath's name will have its place among the peace-makers whom God calls His own children. It is our part now to cherish the lessons that he taught, both by example and by word of mouth. If it is possible to collect his published writings and present them to the public in an ordered form, this should certainly be done without delay. One of the saddest things at the present time that is happening in Bengal (I speak as a true friend) is the lack of permanent records of the great and noble lives which have been lived in the past and present generations. The age, in spite of much to the contrary, has been a really great one in Bengal, and historians in the future will look back with regret, if they find no sources to refer to whereby to distinguish its greatness.

"Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God."

The words as I write them take me back to that most beautiful of all blessings (which I heard so often repeated at Shantiniketan, Bolpur)—the great Vedic blessing of 'peace.' That wonderful Sanskrit prayer with its refrain of Shanti, Shanti, unites Benoyendra

Nath's soul with the great ages of the India of the past. May peace be with him now,—the peace that passeth understanding,—in the communion of the Eternal Love.

—C. F. Andrews.

Character and Creed

It is characteristic of modern times that character has replaced creed as test of worth. In our estimates of men, the church they belong to or the creed they follow has not the same determining force as it once had. Theological controversies may keep the academies warm and lively but the days are passed when they could flood the streets with blood or strew the ways of everyday life with the thorns and thistles of jealousies and suspicions, hates and heresies. Men are brought and held together by a variety of interest. The cheap and rapid means of communication and the extensive growth and expansion of commerce and the consequent intercourse between nations have removed many of the old world prejudices, the brood of ignorance and have prepared different sections of humanity to understand each other better and to study each other's life and history with sympathy and friendliness. There is more love and charity between members of different nations to-day than there ever was. As a result it is not differences but concordances, not wherein we disagree but wherein we agree is claiming more and more attention. And in the religious world this spirit is showing itself in the tacit acquiescence of men and women to forget and forgive theological differences and to search and seize the central concordances to build a palace of peace for the large human family to live in love and amity. It is in their ethical side that all religions have the most in common and it is this side of religions that is absorbing more and more of the interest and energy of man in the religious sphere. Creed has given place to character as the recommendation to sympathy and friendship. Nor can the tolerant spirit that is born of better understanding alone claim all the credit or otherwise of this change. The keen practical sense of the times has much to do with it. The distinguishing note of Christianity is the sense of the intense reality of the present, the awful issues of the instant and immediate. And modern civilization is the child of Christianity and with its growth and development has been more and more mastered and dominated by the parental characteristic, the intense sense of the reality of the living actual. The average

moderner enjoys less of intellectual peregrinations into the land of probabilities than the average man of ancient times. He is absorbed in the present, the duty before him is imperative, the call of the present should be obeyed. What he should do and not what he will become, that is what engrosses him most. It is quite natural therefore that character as giving and ordering the present should weigh with him more than creed that speculates on the probabilities of the future.

Damodardas Govardhandas Sukhadwala (1846-1913)

The Prarthana Samaj of Bombay has been deprived of a saintly and pious guide and leader, who, by his devout, meek and simple life, showed what an intense influence the living and spiritual faith of the Samaj can exercise on the character and thought of its followers. The people outside are speaking of his charities and philanthropies; but we of the Samaj value most the inner soul and spirit of which they were but the outward manifestations and none knew more intimately than we did, the inherent holiness, purity and sincerity of the soul of our departed brother. His strong and determined will to do what he thought to be right and proper, his readiness to do what he could to uplift his countrymen, his noble and selfless thoughts and sentiments, all revealed his close association with, and vivid realisation of the immanent presence of the Divine Mother and made him the source of inspiration to his sisters and brothers of the Samaj. Damodardas was spiritually great but his humility made him oblivious of it and the earnest devotee of God was always full of simple, child-like faith in his Divine Mother and his sense of entire dependence on Her.

Damodardas was first drawn to the Prarthana Samaj by a fellow-student of his. He had the good fortune to hear the addresses of Keshav Chandra Sen and was much impressed by his sermons and prayers. Thereafter he attended the weekly Services in the Prarthana Samaj and, a year after the establishment of the Samaj, joined it as a member in March 1868. Ever since that time the Samaj and its faith were always uppermost in his mind and he has all along done what he could for the prosperity of the Samaj and the propagation of its faith. As has been so often remarked the Bombay Samaj has not been able to do much for the Gujarati population of Bombay; but in those early days Damodardas was instrumental in



Damodardas Govardhandas Sukhadwala

having a portion of the Subodha Patrika in Gujarati and bore all the financial burden of the enterprise. He took much interest in the Night Schools of the Samaj for the labouring classes of our city and when the idea of starting a Night School for the Depressed Classes was proposed to him, he readily fell in with it and with the money supplied by him the first night school for those classes was started by the Samaj in 1890. His love and esteem of his Samaj brethren were well-known. When the late Mr. Sadasihva Pandurang Kelkar died, after the memorial service in the Prarthana Mandir, the idea of perpetuating his memory came in the mind of Mr. Damodardas and he at once announced his intention of giving Rs. 5,000 in his memory to the Samaj as an endowment, the interest of which was to be given to a poor *Anusthanic* Brahma family left destitute by the death of the head of the family. It was with the donation of a thousand rupees given by Damodardas that the Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar Free Reading Room and Library, containing a well selected stock of books on Religion, Philosophy and Literature, was established in 1897. Damodardas always wished that the missionary activities of the Bombay Prarthana Samaj should grow and become an important force in the spiritual world of Western India. With this idea he gave a sum of Rs. 10,000 to the Samaj for organising mission work but some members suggested the scheme of having a building to serve as a missionary quarter and also as a meeting place for workers connected with the Samaj institutions. Mr. Damodardas took up the suggestion and the Raja Ram Mohan Ashram, the three storied building situated in the compound of the Samaj Mandir, was built in 1903 at a cost of Rs. 16,000, the whole of which together with Rs. 3,000 meant to form a permanent fund for the upkeep of the building, were paid by him. But his enthusiasm for his faith was not local and embraced whole India. Learning that the Sadharan Brahma Samaj of Calcutta contemplated the organisation of its mission work on a more extensive scale, he announced the munificent and handsome donation of a lac of rupees for the purpose. Other centres of the Brahma Samaj, in Dacca, Madras, Ellore and other places have also been the objects of his munificence. And it has been our pride that the tomb of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the founder of the Brahma Samaj, at Bristol, which had been allowed to fall into disrepair, was thoroughly renovated at his cost in 1910.

Every follower of Liberal Religion is bound to be liberal and just, righteous and merciful in all his other activities. The largeness of heart, produced by the religion which inculcates the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, cannot put up with the narrowness and prejudice in its environment and insists on disregarding the social customs based on them. This is what makes all the Brahmos active social reformers and Mr. Damodardas was a strong and brave-minded one in their ranks. Twice did he visit Europe, America, China and Japan and quietly ignored the sentence of ex-communication passed on him by the people of his caste. And it is on account of similar action on the part of other reformers that the problem of foreign travel is now practically solved in the Presidency of Bombay. He was also a strong supporter of the other items in the propaganda of the social reformer, of female education, widow remarriage and the elevation of the depressed and submerged. It was with his donation of a thousand rupees that the Depressed Classes Mission Society of India started on its successful career in 1906. Ever since he has acted as the Vice-President of the Society and actively helped it by his money and advice. During his foreign travels above referred to he conceived the scheme of establishing free reading rooms and libraries and after his return founded the People's Free Reading Room and Library. For many years he had been thinking of increasing its scope and with this view he recently purchased a large building in the Fort out of a gift of four lacs made by him.

And there are numerous other acts of philanthropy of his, many of which are unknown to the world ; for Damodardas always avoided publicity. Benevolence was natural to him. He regarded that his life was a trust to be spent in the service of humanity and that to do good was but a duty enjoined by God on every one of His children blessed by Him with the means to achieve it. And all this was, as we have said, the manifestation of a holy and noble soul which loved to live and move in the company of God. Early in the morning before going to his work he was to be seen reading the Prarthana Sangit and other devotional books and praying to God. And at our weekly services in the Samaj his fervent devotion and humble spirit greatly strengthened those who prayed in his company. —N. G. W.

Prayer (5)

“I have faith in prayer, and hence my life is what it is. Delusions on the subject of prayer ought to be removed from our community. He who prays but does not wait for an answer is a deceiver. He whose exterior and interior are not the same, who speaketh overmuch, and cannot keep his spirit quiet, at the time of prayer, is a deceiver. The state of prayer is a difficult state. He who prays for wealth, or honour, or any worldly good, nay, even he who prays for more than nine parts of piety and less than one part of the world—is a deceiver. Therefore keep your prayers pure. Pray for heavenly things, alone, and you will get everything else.

This one thing (prayer) I knew, I knew naught else. I had no spiritual friend. I looked up to the sky, but heard of no divine dispensation. No gospel of any known religion reached me. I never took thought whether I should repair to the Christian Church, to the Mohomedan *Musjid*, to the Hindu *Devalaya* or to the *Pagoda* of the Buddhists. From the first, I had recourse to that supplication before God which is greater than *Veda* or *Vedanta*, *Koran* or *Puran*. To Prayer I held fast. I am a man of Faith; I reflect and then I believe. But when once I put my faith in a thing, I am never shaken. What religion should I adopt? Prayer answered the question. I have the conviction that he who prays gets a response he that wants to see, beholds; and he that has a desire to hear, is given to hear. By prayer my intelligence was so cleared up that it seemed I had studied logic and philosophy and difficult sciences for decades in some University. Prayer made me a *Brahmo*, a devotee a missionary, a preceptor.”

—K. C. S.

Where we can be sure

Our actions have two-fold results; they affect our own true being first and influence the world around us next. We cannot control all the consequences of our doings but we have power over them so far as they act upon us. All our actions can ultimately be reduced to some simple motives. Fear, envy, love, greed of power, position and wealth, these almost fill our daily lives and underlie our daily work. They may act singly or jointly and combine in all

possible ways. The inter-play of motives is so subtle, fickle and intricate, they act and react upon one another in such varying degrees of power and they combine with such easy variableness, lightness of touch and elasticity of assertion that behind what seems to us a single act there may be a number of motives actively warring or co-operating or passively approving and acquiescing with one another. It is the reverse of there being a unity beneath an apparent diversity. But it is these motives fickle and elusive as they are, that are all to us ; they are the heart-beats of our true life, our all that will survive our earthly decay and dissolution ; and it is our glorious privilege that here we can rule and control.

The effect of our actions on the outside world we can no more control than we can sway the wind or wave. It is an awful fancy of the poet that brings home to us vividly the mutations of matter, the fancy that the clay which formed Phroach's body may be traced in the mud used to stop a mouse-hole. And we can, if we have the patience, trace the fall of empires, the over-throw of nations and dynasties to some trivial act of a single individual. We are not the masters of our actions so far as they influence the outside world. God uses them to his own purposes. He bends them to the working out of his own grand scheme. But we can control and be sure of them so far as they affect our own true selves. We have it in us to make them subserve the building up of our character, the development of our moral being and the cultivation of our spiritual life. Every bad motive checked and every good one created and fostered goes to strengthen and nourish our higher life. The power to choose and to create motives is the highest gift we have. We may not be able to stop the storm or make the mountain move from its base. But we can create and control our motives, purify and regenerate them, lull their wild warrings, wash away their venom, banish their guile and turn them all to flow from love, the only gleam of the fuller and higher life that awaits us. And what a great privilege and blessing it is thus to be able to create, mould and guide.

Keshub Chunder Sen

Keshub Chunder Sen was primarily and pre-eminently a religious teacher. All his instincts were religious, his feelings and passions were essentially religious, and religion pervaded all that he



Keshub Chunder Sen

did and said. From the day that he resigned his Government service, when very young, to the last day of his life, he worked incessantly for the cause of religion which he had taken in hand. It was he who spread the cause of the Brahmo Samaj all over the country. Before he joined the Brahmo Samaj it was only a local affair of Calcutta. There were a few Samajes, perhaps hardly ten, all over Bengal before his time. On his joining it he took to preaching the new religious, and the Brahmo Samajes and the Prarthana Samajes multiplied fast all over this vast continent. Numbers of young men joined Keshub and put into practice the new principles of social and religious reform which their leader held before them. It was so in Gujrat, in the Deccan, in Punjab, and in Sind, in fact all over the country. The inspiration and the initiative came from Bengal, where many young men gave up their worldly avocations and devoted themselves wholly to the mission-work of the Brahmo Religion. The first all-India movement of any great importance was the one which was founded by Keshub under the name of Bharatvarshiya Brahmo Samaj. Its object was to bring the whole of India under one religious banner and thus to build a substantial great Indian nation. The best men of India, the choicest spirits, the first fruits of the various Universities of India gathered together under this banner, and the country was inundated by them with an activity that left no phase of life undeveloped. Educational, political, social and religious institutions arose everywhere. It was the dawn of a new era.

It is indeed, very significant that tributes are being paid to him in these days from lands far off and from such thinkers as the Rev. J. T. Sunderland of America. It is, indeed, a great pity that the countrymen of Keshub Chunder Sen have not done him the justice he deserves. The late Prof. Max Muller, who knew India very intimately, said of him that he was the greatest son of India. The late Miss Cobbe, one of the greatest women of England in the last century, spoke of him as the most devout man that she had seen; nay, she even compared him to great religious teachers like Buddha and St. Patrick. Dr. Martineau, one of the greatest philosophers and preachers of modern times, spoke of him as a sort of second John, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ. Even the most orthodox Christian divines and missionaries felt the force of Keshub's devout character and trusted his sincerity almost absolutely. When he went to

England at the early age of thirtytwo, he created a profound impression and captured the English nation with his marvellous eloquence. Even Queen Victoria honoured him with a personal interview, and it may truly be said, without any exaggeration, that few men from the East were so much honoured in England. Keshub's fame spread even to America, and the latest of the tributes paid to him by the Americans is the one which appeared some time back in one of the numbers of the *Modern Review*.

One of the greatest contributions of Keshub towards religious thought and life is the "ideal of the Harmony of Religions." Nowhere before was this harmony of religions recognized in the way in which Keshub recognized it and raised it to the level of a religious doctrine of his church. The modern study of the science of Comparative Religion found an ardent devotee in the great and broad-minded Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who, with a wonderful catholicity of mind, read and studied the important religions of the world, chiefly Christianity, Mohamedanism and Hinduism; and rightly was he called by the liberal Muslims a "Moulvi," by the liberal Christians a "Christian Father," and by the Hindus of liberal views a great teacher like Shankaracharya. He saw that there was but one Truth common to all the religions of the world. It was Keshub who proclaimed to the world that all the various religions of the world together constituted one Universal Religion, that they were all parts of one whole, and that in order to develop oneself spiritually one must be a disciple of all of them. The ideal man, according to Keshub's idea of him, was one who could say that he was equally a Hindu, Mohamedan, Christian and a Buddhist. Henceforward the days of separation in religion were over. In no church of the world is offered that honour and reverence to all the great men and prophets of the world irrespectively of caste, nationality or creed, that is given to them in the Church of the New Dispensation, whose first and foremost Apostle was Keshub. Not only high reverence is offered to these Saints, but even personal relationship is formed with these godly and god-like men. Religion has been given by Keshub a truly universal basis and henceforward the world will regard all the Prophets—Christ, Buddha, Moses, Nanak, Socrates, Zoroaster, Confucius and Krishna, as but members of one brotherhood. Till now the world regarded these as competitors who were each others' rivals in the business of preaching God's Word, now

they form but one company, one family. The same is the case with regard to the various Scriptures of the world. Very early in life, before this ideal of the Harmony of Religions was fully attained, Keshub got a Theistic text-book prepared for the use of the Bharat-varshiya Brahmo Samaj, in which were found religious texts from all the Scriptures of the world. Later on the ideal was attained that all the Scriptures were one Scripture, that they all together made one Book.

Again, it is only a speciality of Keshub's Church that there is an equal and a full reverence for these various Scriptures in the minds of the members of that Church. They study devoutly all of them without the least prejudice for any of them and with a perfectly open mind, to receive the spiritual help that each has to offer. Moreover, under the influence of this great harmonizing impulse, quite a new literature has sprung up in Keshub's Church, in which are to be found classical works on Hinduism, Christianity, etc. Keshub was a great orator, one of the greatest India has produced and he is at his best in the lectures delivered by him to thousands of people who literally hung on his lips. I have read some of his prayers, and have found them to be some of the most beautiful things that man has ever said. As his biographer has said: "they are the outpourings of his whole heart into the bosom of the Infinite." These are prayers offered by him in his daily devotions, from which Keshub drew generally all his inspiration. They have a bewitching beauty, a spontaneity and high spirituality rarely to be encountered in the religious literature of the nineteenth century. In them you find a wonderfully sincere man talking face to face with God in a manner that was free from all convention. Indeed, these matchless prayers deserve to be translated into the chief languages of the world.

Another ideal for which Keshub stood all his life and which was intimately connected with his ideal of the Harmony of Religion, was the harmony of East and West. Essentially an Eastern, he spoke in his latter days more as a representative of the whole of Asia than of India, as can be seen from his last Town Hall lecture, given in his failing health, which was styled "Asia's Message to Europe." His first lecture given in that place, some twenty years before he gave the last, was styled "Jesus Christ, Europe and Asia." He believed the task of uniting the two homes, Eastern and Western,

of his Father, which have been disunited so long and between which there exists a sort of perpetual antagonism, to be a mission that he had from Heaven, and he always appealed to both Asiatics and Europeans generally, and Englishmen and Indians specially, to approach each other with love, respect and reverence. The Rev. Sunderland is quite right when he says : " Few men of Asiatic birth have been more appreciative of Europe or more ready to receive her rich contributions to civilization. But this did not make him ashamed of Asia, or forgetful of her great place in history, or neglectful of her claims upon him as her son." He again says : " I always admired his loyalty to his own land,—India,—his deep love for her, his profound faith in her future, intellectual, religious and political, and his firm conviction that if the sun of her greatness had in any sense set, it would rise again with not less than its ancient splendour."

Another side of Keshub's character was his activity as a social reformer. There is not the least doubt that he was the greatest and the foremost social reformer of India. Before he joined the Brahmo Samaj, it was purely a society where the members met for the purpose of worshipping God in an unidolatrous form. The priests who offered the worship were Brahmins, and most of the members had no idea of carrying the principles of the Samaj into their home-life. They stuck to the idolatrous ceremonies when marriages or *shradhas* were to be performed. Although they believed in the brotherhood of man, they were very far from putting into practice this principle. They observed caste for all practical purposes, and in matters of social reform there was a vast divergence between belief and practice. It was Keshub who put life into the body of the Brahmo Samaj, which was then only a local institution, as could be seen from its name which was " Calcutta Brahmo Samaj." After Keshub joined, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore departed from the former practice of allowing the use of the Samaj altar only to a Brahmin, Keshub was the first non-Brahmin to preach from the Brahmo Samaj pulpit. Again, it was through him that the first intermarriage took place in the Samaj. So great was his eagerness to put into practice the principles that he professed, that ultimately the older party, headed by Maharshi, had to throw him and his younger enthusiastic friends out, first from the pulpit and then from

the Samaj. It was then that the All-India Brahmo Samaj was founded, and all over the country there passed a wave of enthusiasm for religious and social reform. Caste has been one of the greatest of India's banes ; and no other indigenous movement has done so much to destroy this evil of caste as the Brahmo Samaj, and all the credit of removing caste in the Brahmo Samaj belongs primarily to Keshub Chunder Sen. He gave to India a wonderful moral energy which has been the means of removing all the evils of the old order and establishing a new social order. It was always a cherished desire with him to found a perfect society on a new and reformed basis, and for this purpose there was established an Ashram, called Bharat Ashram, in which many families lived together for the purpose of mutual aid in spiritual progress. Later on he and most of the missionaries of the Brahmo Samaj had their houses close to each other so that they might be all one community, religiously and socially. Keshub was the creator of the Brahmo community, which has been one of the greatest achievements of moral and spiritual power in modern India. While most of the other social reformers have tried to remove this evil and that, to reform in this direction and in that, in a patch-work fashion, Keshub stood for wholesale reform of man religiously and if he really reformed that way, he was sure to reform socially. His social reform was entirely dependent on religion ; and that is exactly why he succeeded in creating a new community. He never went for social reform as such, it appealed to him only so far as it coincided with his religion. He was very cautious in introducing reforms and feared to tread where others run rashly, and he was opposed to the wholesale importation of Western customs, manners and institutions, although none there was who admired the West in those things in which it deserved to be.

These are but a few phases of the marvellous and many-sided character of this great son of India whom the Indians are coming to know by and by. He was one of those men who may be called "a hero," in the truest sense of the term, a hero like Luther or Mahomet. The Rev. Sunderland might well call him a true prophet after the type of the Old Testament prophets. He might well say that no more impressive and inspiring religious personality appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century. —M. C. P.

Religion of Will and Religion of Trust

There are two kinds of religion in the world, the religion of will and the religion of dependence. Among the teachers of the former type of religion Buddha was the foremost. Of the latter type we find examples in Chaitanya, Nanak, Christ and others. Buddha insisted on his disciples the necessity of working out their own salvation—the principle which he preached all through life. This might lead one to suppose that he was an atheist. But that was not really the case. He thought it far better to employ one's energy and time in bettering his own condition than to spend them in thinking of a supra-mundane God. Being always occupied in self—culture he ignored the usefulness of prayer. According to him, a man's destiny was of his own making. He was entirely bound by his own *karma* (work) good or bad. God could not deprive him of the merits of his good work or save him from the punishment of his own sins ; it was all the same whether a man prayed or not. As the health and soundness of the body depend on exercise and diet and not on mere crying for these things, so in order that a man may progress in spiritual life he should regulate himself according to the moral laws. "Our soul is our own friend and it is our own enemy," says the Bhagavat Gita. There is much truth in it. It is quite true that a man who does not know and appreciate the value of his own faculties can hardly succeed in gaining eminence.

But overlooking the manifest unreality of this view, it has certain drawbacks which make it unfit for being a satisfying religion either for prosperity or for adversity. In adversity it does not give strength or peace. The poor struggling soul feels himself alone and unfriended. In his struggles and anxieties he has not the sure confidence of a believer who knows that God is our Father and all is right. In prosperity it gives birth to pride and self-complacence. Man becomes proud. Everywhere he sees his own glory.

Those who adopt the path of trust and love are free from this kind of difficulty. They do not get tired of their work. Love and faith which form the motive of their actions, sweeten their labour and give consolation to their troubled souls in times of grief. Love lightens labour is a truism. How often have we seen that nurses or others who attend a patient for money or from a sense of duty get tired, on the other hand those who work out of affection and love are

never tired but rather find delight in it. The labour to them is a labour of love. True friendship and love cannot but produce healthy influence upon the mind of man.

Love and trust in God leads to peace and hope. The soul feels the impulse of a new force acting upon it. The man influenced by love of God finds it easy to do a work which was an unpleasant task before. The dejected spirit finds new strength and vigour. Conscious of the wonderful power of the love of God upon the souls of men the votaries of the religion of love ask others to set their whole heart on God that their souls may find peace in Him. When trials come, the true believer in God stands alone fearlessly, having trust in him, and looks the whole world in the face. This type of religion is superior to the former one.

But it may be objected that the religion of trust will lead to idleness. If God is always ready to forgive our trespasses and make up our deficiencies, we need not exert ourselves. It must be confessed that gross abuses have been committed in the name of trust and dependence on God. But true trust in God can never be indolent. For we always find that wherever there is love there are certain other elements present along with it. First, there is unity of intention and ideal. If I love a man, I also love to do what is agreeable to him. If I love God certainly I should like to do and to be as He wishes to see me. He has given me my faculties to make their best use; if I love God I cannot neglect their culture. Secondly love leads to co-operation. If a person loves me, he will always be eager to help me. If a man sees me toiling hard in some work, and yet can stand idle, it must at once be concluded that he does not love me. Whoever loves me cannot be indifferent to my labours. Thirdly love cannot deceive. True love requires absolute sincerity. If I love God I cannot but be sincere in my prayers to God. If I love God sincerely I shall do my utmost to be true to my prayer. Thus a life of trust is far from being a life of indolence but is one of utmost strenuousness. In true trust there is not the slightest possibility of idleness.

—S. N. S.

Religion of the Surface

The most important condition for the growth of a religion is that it should take its roots deep in the hearts of those who profess

it. Unless it has made its way deep down in the heart, there is hardly any likelihood of its influencing its adherents for good. It will be like the branch of a tree, cut away from the plant and set in the ground. As a branch of this description may appear beautiful for sometime, until it is either blown away by the wind or scorched by the rays of the sun, so, a man whose heart has not been touched by his religion, may appear to superficial observers as a pious and religious person, but a little trial, a little temptation, a little persecution, will not fail to reveal him in his true colour. Where religion has become a matter of daily routine, where it consists of mere outward observances, of rituals and ceremonials, where useless and meaningless forms have taken its place, such a state of things, as we have described above, is a matter of every day experience.

We cannot and must not take religion on trust. Because, our parents followed a particular religion, we do not for that reason belong to it. The example of our elders may help us a great deal to put right our relation with our Maker, but we must take our religion ourselves. The followers of some religions often make it a matter of boast that their religions count large numbers of adherents. At a time, when one is tempted to do this, the question which he should ask himself, is how many of these followers are real believers and how many have accepted their religion on trust. A religion, to speak in a general sense, may be very good, its tenets may be of the noblest kind, it may be free from dogmas, which are often the stumbling blocks of the majority of the existing religion, the practice of its principles may enable its adherent to realise a truly religious life, but even such a religion, when it is taken on trust, becomes superficial, it cannot take deep roots and there is a danger of its being completely shaken and perhaps, altogether blown away, at the appearance of a trivial trial or persecution. Superficial growth is no growth at all. On the contrary it becomes a positive menace to the growth of the religion of the heart. Religion again is not a matter of a day or two. We cannot become members of a particular church and rest satisfied that we have obtained our salvation. A religion which is not superficial works itself in the heart of man unceasingly. Like the root, which goes deep in the ground, but which is shut away from the sight, true religion is highly essential to our growth and it makes itself felt in our



Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar

daily life. Religion of the surface is therefore a state which is to be guarded against by all. It should be our aim to see that religion of the heart finds a firm place in us and as time advances takes firm hold of us till at last every thought we think, and every act we act bears on it the stamp of the faith we profess.

Wisdom Tabloids (7)

The name of man has been so glorified, because he has the privilege of knowing God and the religious duties instituted by Him. Who is more unfortunate than he, who having received the supremely valuable human life fails to know God? Who is poorer than the person, who is unable to taste the unspeakable joy, that is felt by realising God who is the object of highest love? He is to be pitied.

* * * *

He who thinks that he has not known God, has really known Him. On the other hand, he who thinks that he has known Him, really does not know Him. The truly wise person thinks that he has not known God; but he who is not so wise thinks that he has known God.

* * * *

As God, the supreme father looks upon the world with a generous eye and desires the good of even the smallest insect, he, likewise, imitates that vision and desire. Whatever is the purpose of God, is his desire and his action. The purpose of God is surely accomplished, so his desire is fulfilled. Consequently, he enjoys all objects of his desire with God. And having realised his desire, lives contented in the holy companionship of God, as his associate and follower.

Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar

Dr. Bhandarkar's was the task of understanding the history and tradition of his own country from a first-hand and critical knowledge of ancient documents, inscriptions, coins and similar vestiges of the past, and, reconstructing from this material and reading from it the lineaments of the life that our ancestors lived, the truths they

uttered, and the high and lofty notions that they formed about man's responsibilities in this world and the next, of giving to his countrymen the right perspective of India's pristine past, in order that they may not be either blind worshippers of the new or the blind followers of the old.

A scholar, in the true and broad sense of the term, is an interpreter of the old as well as the new. It is not enough for him merely to decipher the old; it is not enough to bring the forgotten into the light of the day. It is certainly not for him to colour or exaggerate but he illumines what he touches. He makes us see things in their proper light. His critical acumen, his power of comparison, his discrimination and grasp, and the synthesis, that follows from the old facts passing through the crucible of his mind, are of great value to those whose task it is to apply ideas to the needs of life. Dr. Bhandarkar was an interpreter of his country to the world and to his own generation. And it was this critical spirit in him, that made him a reformer and saved him from extremes of conservatism and reform.

The extreme conservative is an obscurantist; the extreme reformer is another name for a revolutionary. Bhandarkar was neither the one nor the other. He welcomed light from all quarters. Call him an eclectic if you please but he had his firm moorings in the best the ancient past of his own country, which he had studied first hand and not only known and adopted as a tradition. The Upanishads, the Bhagawat-gita the philosophy of Shankara and Ramanuja, the Vedas and the Vedanta Sutras along with the discipline in Indian logic and grammar, he had passed through them all with the spirit of a Pandit and a savant. And he was also deeply read in the philosophy of the West, Kant and Martineau being his favourites. And this study, meditation, and close thinking had gone on with him from the time of his adolescence, while he was reading at college down to almost within a few years before his death—that is for over fifty years. And during all these years, the dearest object of his research and scholarship was to trace the voyaging of the human spirit through the vicissitudes of history and time, to find out the eternal and the permanent in the transitory and the changing. In his Marathi sermons, Dr. Bhandarkar has laid under contribution his deep knowledge of Sanskrit literature and philosophy enriched

by his intimate knowledge of the works of the Maratha saints from Dnyaneshwar to Tukaram to illustrate, enforce, and emphasise this relation and the responsibility that the realisation imposes upon a man to his allotted work in this world.

Dr. Bhandarkar was no ascetic though he was a man of austere principles and conduct. He was a believer in a personal God and in the power and need of the grace of God in strengthening man's resolves in this world. He was no Adwaitist. Between him and his God there was for him no better relation than that of a *Bhakta* and his supreme saviour. He was rather a Vaishnavait in spirit leaning towards Ramanuja, but he was at the same time a theist, believing in one without the second and the fulfilment of man through righteousness, piety, and self-surrender. He was no recluse but an active worker in the service of his country. Belonging to a particular school of thought and action in Western India, the school of reform all along the line based upon purity of faith, purity of life, conduct and character and a feeling of patriotism in which no taint of narrowing sectarianism, parochialism or the spirit of caste or colour could find any shelter. This school had been described by the late Mr. Justice Ranade as the School of Vashistha and Vishwamitra, the two extremes which the names imply showing and suggesting the blending of the old and the new, the synthesis on which India was to pass to repeat the words of Raja Ram Mohan Roy not from the East to the West, but through them both to an inflorescence better and brighter than both. Dr. Bhandarkar was no blind lover of everything Western, he was no blind hater of it, either; he loved the Englishman and the European and praised him for just those traits of character, his industry, his love of order, his courage, his tenacity, his sense of fairplay, his enterprise, his power of organisation and corporate action, his robust commonsense which by experience he had found his own people without. And he desired that it was in these matters that the Indian should emulate his brother from the West and not in the latter's mode of living, dress, food, and external habits.

He knew and has shown what great traits the Indian had possessed in the past and he has also laid bare the causes that had made him fall from his high estate. Among these he ranks political tyranny, priestly tyranny, and social tyranny as the worst.

The task of the reformer is to make short work of this threefold tyranny by a programme of reform from within, so that the shell of custom would burst. Nothing is more illuminating in this connection than his essay on the Social History of India. In an essay on Theism occurs a passage which bears a quotation as it shows his spirit of reform both in religion and social matters. Traversing over a wide ground from the times of the early Vedas down to Tukaram, Bhandarkar says, "The Indian world still remains overgrown with the weeds of falsehood notwithstanding the efforts of these great men. The truth taught by the Rishis of the Upanishadas still remains neglected and ceremonial practices have still usurped the place of spiritual worship. Though the mediæval Sadhus taught a finer form of faith, they did not, as a general rule, set their face against the popular beliefs and modes of worship with sufficient firmness and decision. This appears to me to be the principal reason why their mission was not completely successful. Let us, therefore, while endeavouring to realise their humility and single-hearted devotion, attempt to supply this defect." And then he outlines the new synthesis of thought and action as follows:—

"Let us like Tukaram exert ourselves to bring into practice the teaching of the old Rishis, and learn from all the sources now available to us, indigenous as well as foreign. Let us learn from the Vedic hymns that the temple in which we should find God and worship him is the Universe and the heart of man; from the sacrificial religion which once prevailed that we should not overgrow and destroy the tender plant of spiritual worship; from Buddhism, that religion is not a privilege of a favoured class, and that without high moral feeling and action it is an empty thing; and from its failure, that mere morality will not exalt the spirit and satisfy the religious craving of the heart and cannot be attained; from the Upanishads, that the purity of heart is the way of arriving at God, and contemplation brings us face to face with Him and elevates the soul; and from the Gita and the Bhakti School, that man by his own efforts cannot effect his salvation, that God alone is our Father, Friend and Saviour, and that we should lay our souls at His feet, live in Him, and for Him, and not for ourselves. If in all humility we learn whatever is to be learnt from other sources, that God in His mercy has laid open to us and follow our guide fearlessly and faithfully, we need not be afraid of our future."

This in brief, is Bhandarkar's outline of a purer form of worship and faith for New India, a faith that will unite, that will dissolve spurious and artificial divisions and differences between man and man, that will introduce into our private and public conduct sincerity, courage, and noble fervour; that will do away with hypocrisy, duplicity, suspicion, and estrangement that characterise our relations with one another at the present day and that will lift us to a higher platform and regard all fellow-workers as brothers, in spite of their differences in race, colour, creed and language. —V. N. N.

Back to Nature

Life is defined by the latter day philosophy and is almost demonstrated by the present day practices as a struggle, and is aptly described in a phrase of the common parlance, "Getting on" implying something to be elbowed and kicked back. And since by an analogy nations are shown to live, only as individuals, and since the struggles of the nation are after all to be maintained by the individual, the fighting power of the latter is to be increased indefinitely. The result is—that lives most, whether individual or nation, which gets and spends most attacks and defends most: this is the understood meaning of the boasted strenuous life. Both the individual and his nation thus reduce the specific gravity of their lives, almost to zero point and dance their sparkling courses, on the surface of history, to the passing amazement of the world, as the Portuguese and Spaniards of Europe and the Moguls and Tartars of Asia, have done and as the major part of modern civilization, is at present, promising to do. Is there nothing beyond the little world of our own deeds and misdeeds, that may feed and keep us up, soothe and cheer and make us whole and restore us to a truer life, to which we are destined? Yes, there is a vast world of divine deeds. Nature of which ours is but an atom. Back to it, all weary and heavy laden! For from it ye all came.

But even in these times of fast life and noisy speed, we see thousands panting after the silent shrines of Nature, the high hills and the retired country places and open sea-coasts. There has been an instinctive craving in mankind of all ages and of all grades, to see the full face of Nature, although it is sometimes wrongly supposed

that the love of Nature is a modern development and what is still more strange, a European Development. In spite of his later unhealthy habits and extravagant ideals of active life, man has yet retained, not only his innate love, but also his incompletely cultivated, taste for Nature. When these revive in him, he flies to her as the duck from a dirty field to a pond, as the bird from a cage, into the blue of the heavens. But, generally speaking, this is of all human instincts, the least cultivated ; and yet in it, lies the patent cure for almost all the ills which man is likely to induce on himself.

Nature then is the universal nurse, readily healing and tending the wounded and sick that repair to her from the battle-field of life. Not to speak of the physical cure, the balmy and mystic influences of her sanatoriums, wonderfully heal the many moral and spiritual maladies by setting right, the several sub-conscious actions of the mind, heart, soul which ere now have alike suffered from long suffocation in the crowded atmosphere of artificial life. The silence of the hills and stillness of the valleys hush up all the inner rustle of inordinate desire, the dark frowns of the precipice chases away all secret unchastity that had hitherto escaped even confession, the placidity of beasts and raptures of birds calm down all petty ambition and kill jealousy. But, nature is not only a healer, but a kind mother, feeding every babe that enters as such her house-hold, with the milk of higher life. Inspiration is that milk, and that none but she can give. The great deliverers of nations, spiritual as well as secular—if any such distinction is possible at all, the heroes and martyrs of mankind, in a moment's flash of inspiration, are fed by the hand of nature with food, enough to sustain them, in their life-long task. When the divine light is revealed to the gifted sons of God, they have to be suckled on her high bosom for strength to bear her message down to humanity in the plains. Moses on the Sinii and Mahommed on the Hera had their respective fills. Gautam and Jesus during the reputed forty days, fasted in the eyes of the world, but really feasted in the hall of Nature. Tukaram repeatedly retired into the solitudes of the Bhandara mountain and our Maharshi Devendra to the Himalayas. Poets and painters, thinkers and workers have alike fed on this inexhaustible bosom. Even the common men and women are favoured with such "High hours of visitation" that the very memory

will suffice afterwards to keep them up, amidst the crushing toils of the world. Back, then to the bosom of Nature. —V. S. S.

Pour Thy Soul in Gratitude

When the scorching heat of the May sun is over and is succeeded by the most eagerly looked for, refreshing and life-giving rains, the whole aspect of the earth is changed. Where at one time—only a few days back—were to be seen plains without even a blade of green grass meeting the eye, where the hills looked like so many burnt rocks of clay, where the trees appeared to be doing penance—atoning for their past sins—by standing out in the baking noonday heat, is now to be found a wondrous transformation of the whole scene. The plains are now full of green grass and as far away as the eye can reach, no other colour but green with the occasional shining bright of the pearl-like drops of rain meets the eye. The hills are covered with green verdure and appear to have given up their grim, ascetic-like appearance which repelled children and grown up men alike from climbing them. Creepers have grown in plenty and are inter-twining one another in close embrace and occasionally climbing up big and unwieldy trees for pleasure and safety. Animal life is showing more activity than before. The gnats are on the wing and in the evening time may be seen wheeling about in the air, for exercise and re-creation. The sage snail has begun with its slow pace and undisturbed dignity of walk, its journeys up and down the hill, occasionally traversing the plain for the purposes of inspection. The rainbow coloured butterflies can be seen hovering from tree to tree and from flower to flower, with the untiring zeal which characterises them; while the cunning spider is spinning its web, with its well known perseverance, in a quiet corner, to catch the unfortunate and foolish flies that may headlong rush into it. The chirping of the sparrows, the crowing of the noisy crowds of the ever-present rooks and the more or less shrill notes of many other birds, show that life with them is joy and the question of 'to be or not to be' which faces so many men at every step they take, does not trouble them in the least. Thus wherever you behold, upon vegetable or animal life, you find that it is giving vent to its sense of gratefulness to God for His infinite mercy to them.

But to the man whose soul is not alive to the love of God, this change in the seasons and the consequent beautifying of nature comes and passes away as a matter of course. To him the timely showers that come down from the skies are only useful in as much as the chances of his reaping a plentiful harvest depend upon them. His ideas of their usefulness do not go beyond the fact that they enable him to plough his fields, to sow seed and gather a rich harvest and thus keep the body and soul together for one more year. His fear of starvation is over and he rejoices in that. To others who have nothing to do with agricultural pursuits, the rains come as a nuisance. The abomination of going out in the drenching showers, of having soaked shoes and socks, of carrying the dripping umbrella on the shoulder, is so great that they would not be sorry if it ceased to rain before its time! The luxuriance of the natural scenery, and the descent of silvery streams of water from the hills, do not appeal to their imagination. But to him whose soul is quick to every change and who has learnt to understand its true value and utility, the beauty and majesty of nature have a world of meaning and significance. The glimpses of the green meadows, the flowing of streams, the wild, fantastic growth of verdure, plants and trees, the chirping and twittering of birds, the appearance of dark clouds on the horizon, the veriegated coloured rainbow, the majestic thunder and the glorious lovely lightning, each one of these is a manifestation of God's love to man. He delights to go to such a place—far away from the haunts of men, far from the din and noise of the busy town, to commune with his Maker in silence and learn to love Him with a full heart. The budding life of the vegetable, the beauty of the majestic mountain and "The Flora pouring in June's front" and not of April as is the case elsewhere and as has been sung by the poet, these have a charm for him, before which all human luxuries fall into utter insignificance! Solitude at such a place and at such a time of the year, inspires man with gratitude for the benefits he receives. While he is struck dumb with awe, by the working of God and the wonderful order that prevails in His world, his heart undergoes a process of complete awakening, and love which is the necessary result of gratitude, becomes the dominant passion of his life. What wonder, then, that the sages of old preferred the primitive cave in the wild mountain to the houses of men in the country and the towns, and longed to dwell in it, to worship God with a pure heart! If we want

to develop the divine in us to its utmost, if we want to see our God, face to face, to speak with Him and to love Him, let us also betake ourselves, to places where human eyes will not watch us and human tongues will not criticise us. Let us, in other words, learn to meditate in places where there is luxuriant natural scenery—for that is one way of understanding God better and of purifying our hearts—and learn also to pour our soul in gratitude to Him who is the *Author* of all good.

—V. S. S.

Vice and Crime

“Crimes sometimes shock us too much; vices almost always too little.” As a rule crimes are committed under some Provocation, under the influence of some excited feeling and very rarely in cold blood. The excited feeling is near allied to madness, it might be considered as temporary insanity. A man under its influence cannot in some respects be regarded a master of himself and responsible for his actions any more than a man permanently insane. But these actions shock us by their heinousness. We are very indignant at the perpetrators of crime and cry out loudly for vengeance on them or for justice as we call it. Vices never shock us that way, whether our own or others. We should not bear to have a murderer in our company but we should not in the least mind being on the friendliest of terms with the most debauched and vicious of men. If the latter be men of means and power, so much the less do we look to their moral character. We treat the moral character as of less account than their power or riches. In a spirit of self-love we excuse our own vices and in a spirit of what we miscall charity we excuse, when from motives of self-interest it serves our purpose, the vices of others. “Who” we ask “is perfect in this world, who has not got his own vices? Am I who am asked to shun the society of this man or that, am I myself free from vice, am I to turn up my nose to another? The weight of what moralists call the social sanction has thus been reduced to a minimum. But then do we not criticise our neighbours as if we were superior beings, and often unjustly? If we do that, is it from real charity that we ignore their vices and mix with them freely without showing our disapproval in the slightest degree? Then again there are ways and circumstances in which a man can show his disapproval of them without implying his own

superiority. Is there moreover no difference in degree between the wickedness of one vice and that of another? Would that not give to a person who has got one sort of vice authority by virtue of his otherwise righteous life to advise another whose vices have more of sinfulness in them? If an association of men meet for an object far from laudable, or has such an object as one of many others, and if it ask our countenance are we not bound not to give it until that object is discarded, are we not bound to use our influence with them, which we know we have, to make them discard it? Is it not a failure of duty if we do not do so? The same is the case when we see men making light of serious things in our presence or speaking disrespectfully of things and persons they ought to respect. Once again, what we cannot do individually without implying a superiority to which we can lay no claim, we can do as a society without reproach. But what little use we put the social sanction to at present is not to encourage virtue and discourage vice but to tease those who have broken the caste rules which are more honoured in the breach than in the keeping of them, not because we disapprove of the breach—we ourselves break them or less objectionable ones, but because we do not like a particular man or the way he challenged the society by doing the breach openly. Notwithstanding all these, if we in our daily intercourse associate with wicked men, with men of vicious habits without showing our disapproval, to the proper degree, of that which we find in them worthy of our censure, it is not because we are charitable but because vice shocks us too little. Vice, should however, if anything, shock us more than crime. A man committing a crime under the actual influence of excited feeling may repent and may never do it again when the excitement is over. Vicious habits as one is aware are not so easily got rid of. Crime is one act and does not so blight the moral and spiritual part in man as a settled vice. Vice is therefore more fatal in its results than crime and ought to appal us accordingly. Just because it does not appal to the extent that it should, we disregard it, we treat it lightly. Hence it has full scope for development and spreads from man to man and so lays low whole nations that they can never hope to rise again. There is nothing more that is necessary to ruin a nation, there is nothing more effectual in this respect than sloth, selfishness, servility, self-conceit, irreverence and unholiness. All these and innumerable other vice

are in full swing just now and they need all the help we can render to each other in charity and in love but always uncompromisingly to put them down.

What is Revelation ?

If we take the Vedas, the Koran or the Bible, and examine them a little, we shall see at once that they are mere human compositions, recording the gradual progress of human thought and human morals. Their influence on those who accept them as their religious books and who believe in their infallibility is very great; and this we do not deny for a moment. And although we do not believe in their revelation in the sense in which the orthodox people do, we value them as precious treasures. We know that the thirsting soul of many a man has found the water of eternal life in them; many a man's doubts and perplexities have been solved by them. They have been the haven of rest of many a troubled heart, and they have saved millions of God's creatures from wrecking and ruining their lives and have turned them from the downward path, into his service. The books that teach man to love his neighbour as himself and to bear no false witness against him, the books that teach him that there is no religion higher than truth, whatever their shortcomings, whatever their imperfections, are books that must command the homage of every thoughtful individual in every country and in every clime. This is why the Theistic Church while it holds that no book is infallible, and while it enters upon no odious comparisons regarding their quality and utility, reveres all religious books and readily assimilates in itself all that is good in them, for its edification, guidance and inspiration.

We do not however believe that for the propagation of our religion it is at all necessary for us to possess a book of a transcendent character. Nor can we persuade ourselves into believing that the moral cowardice which may have been displayed by some theists in the past, or which may unfortunately be exhibited by any of them in the future, is to be attributed to the absence of a book which they could appeal to and follow. The Theists like all other human beings have their weak moments and if they are as much subject to temptations of this world as those who have a book of so-called divine authority to follow, there is nothing to be wondered at.

While however the so-called revealed books may be found on examination not to fulfil all that is claimed for them, there is a revelation which must remain unshaken for ever and in which all Theists believe. The will of God has been revealed to man ever since the time that man began to think of his Maker. Revelation is not happily confined to any particular book or any particular person although in their zeal, the followers of different religions may claim that privilege for the books and founders of their respective religions only. God's will is revealed to man through his own conscience and the man who does not obey it, will certainly obey less a book which after all cannot speak to him with the same directness and strength of conviction. No truly religious man ever attaches any great importance to a book revelation; to him the wonderful world of God is a revelation in itself. Did not Robertson, a pious Christian as he was, exclaim "The highest revelation is not made by Christ; it comes directly from the *Universal mind* to our mind?" What was the experience of Robertson is also the experience of every thoughtful soul who has learnt to commune with his creator. The revelation of God's love to man and man's duty to his Maker is made at every moment of the life of man. Greater credit is therefore due to those who act according to the will of God for its own sake, because they believe it to be their duty and not because a particular book asks them to do it. Those who knowing this, look for a book revelation to stand upon, do injustice to God and to their own powers of thinking. The religion of the Theistic Church is based on a revelation of the natural kind; it is based on the deepest experiences of the human soul which nothing can shake and no religious books—products of man's intellect and imagination as they are, can subvert. Our religion may not count a large number of adherents; but after all the numerical test of gauging the influence and potency of a religion is very deceptive. Our religion has the *motto of truth* engraved upon it and we believe it is ultimately bound to prosper.

—V. S. S.

Wisdom Tabloids (8)

At His command, the sun, standing at the centre of the solar system, has been illuminating like a lamp by its own light, the Earth and other planets within it; and holding them fast in their respective

paths (orbits) by its own might, and has been keeping alive by distributing its vitality, birds, cattle and other animals, and trees, creepers and other vegetables. Held by this law the beautiful moon, with its nector-like rays, has been roaming, in the void paths (of the heavens) and has been delighting the hearts of all, putting on new dress every night and has been keeping alive and fresh the vegetables by its beautiful light.

The union of human soul with supreme soul is spiritual communion. When my will becomes united with His will in spiritual communion, when understanding is satisfied by knowing Him as the true, the good and the beautiful, then the heart offers unto Him the present of Love and becomes immersed in the ocean of joy and thus becomes free from the happiness and sorrow born of worldly desires.

All Life is One

Instead of special creation and specific characteristic I find all life is one. The world is not a chaos, but a cosmos. From the unity of life there follows as a postulate the unity of all human efforts. It is a misreading of the laws of Nature to regard conflict as the only factor in evolution. Far more potent than competition is mutual aid and renunciation in the scheme of life. It is true that the weakling who has refused the conflict, having acquired nothing has nothing to renounce. He alone who has striven and won, can enrich the world with the fruits of victorious experience. It is only out of struggle that some inner power is born through which we come to realise the essential kinship of all humanity. It is through the eternal interaction of the outer and the inner that the world evolves. And the most living man is he, who having acquired through years of patience gives out in spontaneous outflow.—J. C. B.

Prayer (6)

There is solitary prayer when the soul isolated from all creatures is alone with God and feels thus towards Him, 'God and I, God to love, I to adore, praise, glorify, thank; God to bestow, I to humbly receive, renounce, ask, hope, submit. Ah, who can tell all that

passes between the soul and its God. Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed, the motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast. Prayer is the burden of a sigh, the falling of a tear, the upward glancing of an eye, when none but God is near. Prayer is the key to all celestial treasures, by it we penetrate into the midst of all joy, strength, mercy and goodness divine. We receive our well-being from all around us, as the sponge plunged in the ocean imbibes without an effort, the water that surrounds it. This joy, strength, mercy and goodness become our own. —*Dr. Burrows.*

Simple Life

We talk of 'Simple life' as if it were very easy to lead. No doubt the expression 'Simple life' is very enchanting and comparing ourselves with people of Europe whom we find to be always after wealth and the comforts of the world, we pride ourselves on the simplicity of our life. The ancient Hindus—our forefathers, really led simple, in the sense of godly lives, and we, their descendants could boast of it if that were permissible. But so far as our own lives are concerned, I am not certain that it could be said with any degree of correctness that they are simple. For simplicity does not consist in leading careless, meagre and unmeaning lives. If fewness of wants were a test of simplicity, barbarians would be the simplest of human beings on earth. But if simplicity means godliness as I presently intend to show to you it does, then you will admit that such lives are not easy to lead. They mean an effort of supreme magnitude and cultivation of our faculties in no small measure. A simple life means a strenuous and therefore a religious life which must spread its influence quietly yet surely on all who come in contact with it. To illustrate what I mean by simplicity of life I shall take an illustration. Let us take the instance of nature. As Carlyle says, a grain of wheat is mixed up with a good deal of chaff and rubbish and sowed in the earth. Mother earth doest not complain of the chaff but takes in the wheat as quietly as if there was no rubbish with it. The sun rises every morning without tom tom or noise and goes its regular rounds with patience and quietness. The flowers, the blossoms, the seasons, all come in their proper time without advertisement. There is a quiet simplicity about nature which

is not marred by even so much as a show of hurry, disorder or bustle. So also the man of simple life goes about his work in the most uncomplaining way. He is faithful to his Maker. God works in the simplest manner and the man who leads a simple life imitates God in this respect. Simplicity is not ostentatious, nor is there any gorgeousness about it. It is neither showy nor disorderly but truthful, and faithful to the original. In order therefore that our lives may become simple, it is necessary to discipline them. Discipline turns vice into virtue and to be able to do it, we must learn to be strenuous and earnest. Strenuous or religious life is only possible when one gets to the centre of life which is God Himself. By cultivation of godliness can we realise our highest ideals in this world. To lead simple lives we must learn to cultivate godliness which our forefathers had and which we have well nigh forgotten. Simple life therefore does not mean a meagre life but a life that is free from show and which is full of genuineness and godliness.

—N. G. C.

God

Religion is the highest manifestation of personality. It therefore transcends history, ethics, and theology purely as such. It correlates them into one unifying principle which is God, the highest Personality, the seat and the source of all existence, intelligence and blessedness. Reason therefore cannot save, nor science and ethics alone. But science and reason working in harmony with faith in saintliness, self-sacrifice and service, all rooted in those eternal verities of life, for which there is no other word of human speech so deeply expressive, so full of the grandeur and the glory of human effort, so richly laden with the associations of the historic past, as the word God. God the father, God the mother whose name is Love, and God the Saviour and Redeemer of man through human history.

" Speak to Him then, for He hears, and
 spirit with spirit can meet,
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer
 than hands and feet :

Dark is the world to thee ; thyself art
the reason why ;
For is He not all but thou, that hast
power to feel " I am I."

Sir Narayan Chandavarkar

Speaking from the platform of the Aryan Excelsior League one likes more to dwell on the inner and personal life of the great man whose loss we mourn than on his undoubtedly great public career.

It can be truly said of him, what can, after all, be said of very few great public men, that in his case life was not mere being but a constant becoming and that the man was more than all he said and did.

Everyone knows, by now, the story of his outer life, how from youth to ripe old age it was one uniform and continuous story of success, in an ever increasing measure, in all that the world prizes as great. He had his triumphs as a journalist, an educationist, a jurist and lawyer, a politician and publicist, as a preacher from the pulpit and a speaker from the public platform, as a trusted leader of a party and as a guide, philosopher and friend of the students, as also of the humble, the low and the untouchable. He had a career as an official and also as an independent public man and one of the leading spirits of his time. And he came to be trusted of the Government and of the people, if we omit a certain cantankerous section out of them. He had more than his ample in all the prizes and honours of this life.

But if that had been all, it would not have meant, after all, very much. We revere him, love him and will ever continue to miss him because of his treasures of the spirit. It was a life so much valued and cherished by all who knew it or cared to study it aright because first it was a life, that was spotlessly pure. The white flower of unblemished life, pure and tender as the lily and equally trusting and dependent upon the Higher Power that shapes human destiny is a description that can be very aptly applied to him. And it was a



Sir Narayan Chandavarkar

life not lived in isolation and seclusion but in the noise, turmoil, heat and misunderstanding of this work-a-day world. Participating to the full in all its activities, that life contributed by its work to lift it to a higher level of thought and action. It was thus true to the kindred poles of Heaven and Earth. It was a life lived and rooted in principles—the eternal verities as Sir Narayan liked so often to call them, characterized by growth, and, ever deepening into humility and reverence for things that are good, holy, true and beautiful. Thinking on such a life one naturally likes to discover its vital springs of action, the moral motive power behind it. In one word, that power was religion. It was not the religion of dogma, ritual, sect and nationality. It was the religion of meditation and prayer, of the deep understanding of great books and of noble personal example, and of a constant return to one's Higher Self sustained by the assimilation of the best teaching of all scriptures. It was a day to day renewal and transformation of the inner being. It was the fruit of nonconformity and a sincere and passionate longing to know the will of God and live it. "Be transformed, in order that you may be reformed by the renewing power of your own mind in order to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." In that strain the great St. Paul appealed to the Romans in his famous epistle. And by mind he did not imply merely the gift of the understanding but the gift of the spirit also. And Sir Narayan lived his life in conformity to the noble exhortation conveyed in that verse. Speaking of his inner and personal life, what struck one most was his intense and living faith in God and His dispensation. He felt that before communion with one's Maker everything was insignificant. As he has himself expressed it, "Pleasure palls, luxury weakens, enjoyment debases. It is working, serving, struggling and if need be, suffering that rear manhood and lead to Greatness." In the morning and evening his soul was lifted up in unison with the spirit of his Maker. Absorbed in contemplation, he longed to see the divine face and penetrate the veil. One such mood he describes thus "Oh God of our Fathers, Supreme Soul, Nourisher that Thou art, take me behind this mystery. Why hidest Thou Thy Face behind the brilliant disc of the Sun? Remove the veil and admit me to see the Sun of suns behind this sun, who is Thy handiwork that I may see the light that is truth, love and Life Eternal." And this daily communion and prayer, morning and evening, whenever he was

alone and in the face of the grand sights of Nature, nerved him for work and strengthened his hold on himself and the tasks he had to perform. The conviction became rooted in him that whether the day was weary or long, it at last ringeth to even song.

The foundation of his personality was spiritual. In him the growth of the spirit was remarkable. By the transforming power of the spirit, he had mastered his own varied moods. And he had, at last, come to realize peace and serenity and charity of heart and mind. It was, as has been said above, a daily discipline, undertaken as a duty and becoming a habit and a passion. The surrender of his spirit to God was a growing experience with him. And it was the fruit of worship. But worship and prayer were not, in his case, a mechanical routine. Sir Narayan was a devout student of Tukaram and the Bible as also of the Bhagwatgita and Dnyaneshwari. And he revelled in the study of the lives of the masterspirits of the ages that he may gather nourishment from them for his own life. And in the works of one such master-spirit he has himself described what is meant by surrender to and worship of God.

“Not by flowers or sandal powder
Not by music’s Heavenly strain
Is the soul’s true worship rendered !
Useless are these things and vain ;
But the brother and the sister
Man devout and holy
Pure in life, in duty faithful
They perform the worship truly.”

And this surrender and worship which were the fountain of his faith and work he realised by what he has called walking with God. Hear how he describes the transformation it worked in him. “That is the true solution of life—walk with God, commune with Him and in the world—earth of sorrow and drudgery—you find a new world revealed, a living world where sorrow is not sorrow but delight; drudgery passes from dulness into freshness, sanctified by the inward happiness created for us by God’s company, because he nerves our spirits within to bear them with ease. Blessed are those who see this and know it—more blessed those who realise it by experience

for this companionship of God can be realised only by experience." After stating this, he is careful to add that the bliss and reality is for those who are the doers of the doctrine, not the scoffers, the doubters and the pleasure hunters."

Just because he was sustained by this living faith and this growing spiritual experience which wrought a transformation in his whole outlook on life, he came to regard the world as made not only for the select and the few but as a world meant for all. All movements that ignored the efforts to reach the will of man through his soul were movements going along the wrong track. It is not the problem of the educated alone that has to be tackled. It is the problem of the transformation of the national will. Hence his deeper and closer association with reforming movements like the Social Reform Association, the Depressed Classes Mission, the Social Service League, and the Students' Brotherhood. It was through these channels that he desired to implant in the heart of the average man those qualities that were calculated to graft "the better conscience on the wild stock of the natural average man."

And about this matter he explains himself thus:—"The world has to be carried on by average men. It is we who have to carry on the business of the world. Let us see that we get planted in us those powers by the development of which we can do what lies in our power to make the world move onwards and towards the goal we have all at heart. We neglect the ordinary individual. We speak of him as a unit, a small thing. All great things are discerned by small, or as Aristotle says "The greatness of great things is seen by its smallest portions." And after this exhortation he goes on to mention the qualities that characterize the small men equally with the great.

They are:—

1. The power of aspiration.
2. The power of achievement.
3. The power to feel inspired.
4. The spirit of hope.
5. The power to realise the sense of unity.

As we are trying to know what lay behind his work as its guiding principle, we realise that he had all these springs of action in him. Sustained by a pure life, a strong faith and great moral discipline, he aspired high and achieved a great deal. He had realised for himself the synthesis and unity of all national work. He had a perennial spring of hope in him. And his life within and without was a perfect harmony. It was not a life that had ceased to grow. Seeking inspiration from every source, he, even in old age, saw visions. His face was always turned towards light. In his eyes it was a national and ancient characteristic of the race from which he had sprung. And because they had proved false to their heritage, the Hindus have had to undergo all the trials that had been their lot now. Speaking from the platform of the Social Conference at Benares in 1905, he addressed his people thus. "We were children of light. And what did this national yearning for light stand for? It stood as a lesson to us—a lesson to sink in our hearts and animate our lives—that we should always move with the times by means of the light of knowledge acquired, experience gained and events revealed, that we should ever move forwards instead of standing still. It stood for the light of the seer, the insight of the sage and the foresight of the statesman. If we do not move by co-operating with the Universal Mind and move on the lines of humanity, love, truth, justice, equity and right, of self-control and the sacredness of personality, we are doomed to starve, to decay and perish as a dead carcass." Light therefore, meant for Sir Narayan co-operating with the Universal mind and working on the "lines of humanity, truth, justice, equity, right, self-control and sacredness of personality." Anything that came in the way of these was to be discarded. For it meant not growth in life and worth but decay, death and perishing away like a dead carcass. And light he welcomed not merely for the love of innovation and change but for the sake of renovation of his own personality and of the world in the midst of which he had to do his work.

Many more passages can be quoted from his writings and speeches that throw a flood of light on the growth and the springs of his inner life. His life was a success and is a rich legacy to us because of the deep yearning for wisdom that we see in it. It was an eminent success because to him "it was from the cradle to

the grave a course of development of quality as much as of quantity continued to the last." It was successful "because judged in all its proportions and in its outlook on the eternal," it had the quality of wholeness. And further the standards by which it measured itself were of the highest. These had brought a keen sense of short-comings and a deep sense of humility. It was modelled on a deep saying of Goethe viz that "the fashion of the world passes away and it is with the abiding that I would fain concern myself."

—V. N. N.

Character and Reputation

Character, in ordinary conversation, is often mistaken for reputation. But there is a fundamental difference between them. Character stands for a man's intrinsic worth. Reputation is what people think about him. Character is "real" like life itself. It is a fixed quantity in a man's constitution. It is the man himself. Reputation, on the other hand, "is like his shadow which sometimes follows and sometimes precedes him; it is sometimes longer and sometimes shorter than himself." Such is the difference between character and reputation. It often happens that a man who enjoys a sort of reputation for character, when tested in the crucible of the hard realities of life, is found to be absolutely devoid of it.

Traits of Modern Religion

What men should aspire to in religion is reality and not a makeshift. And there can be no reality without a correspondence between its outer forms and its inner contents. It is a great truth which should never be forgotten. Religion to be morally and spiritually effective should also be progressive:—not hanging behind civilization like the heavy tail of a *dumb* sheep, checking and restraining its onward march, but serving like martial music to inspire and strengthen that march. Religion, to the regret of all impartial students of history, has served up to this time, as a retarding weight in the tail of civilization, rather than as a bugle-note leading its van. It is time that religion should be restored to its legitimate function; to be made, under the altered circumstances of modern life, once more

tremendously real. In order to be made real there should be a correspondence between its external forms and its inward contents. In other words the process should be not to set up the forms first and then invite the spirit and the ideas to dwell therein, but to hold fast the new spirit and the new ideas first and then let them assume their proper forms. In the region of biology we daily witness that it is not organism that creates life, but it is life that builds up the organism. Under the altered circumstances of modern civilization, religion to be real and spiritually effective must needs imbibe and assimilate the principles that characterize modern civilization. Briefly speaking in order to be able to influence the onward march of the human mind, at the present times, it should be characterised by the four leading traits of Liberty, Rationality, universality and spirituality.

True Knowledge

That light is true which enables the mind to distinguish between truth and falsehood. That mind has attained the light which in prosperity and in adversity, in festivity and in gloom, maintains its equanimity. He has achieved peace and bliss whose vision, like the nectar-flowing moon, extends the same serene light to all mankind. He is a real hero in life an incarnation of sublimity, who preserves a calm and equable mind, neither annoying his fellow creatures nor being himself worried by anybody or anything ; whose mental and physical powers are at the service of everybody in need ; who perceives the evanescent nature of his physical frame and of the whole material world ; whose intellectual light, like the light of the sun, shines on court and cottage alike ; who is convinced that pleasure and pain are mere mental conditions, which must be present in the active mind to give variety to existence ; and whose view of heroism lies in the suppression of his own evil propensities and passions. That reasoning is true which enables one to avert danger ; that vision is correct which presents to the view of the mind the eternal truth that every created object is bound to perish ; that worldliness is wise which perceives that nothing is gained by laziness except one's own destruction ; that light is clear and bright which leads the mind to feel the same sympathy for the powerless as

for the powerful, for the poor as for the rich, for the ignorant as for the learned, for the foolish as for the wise, for the unclean as for the clean.

--M. C. Mallik

What is to be Young or Old ?

One who feels he has still a mission in life to fulfil, who is able to assimilate new ideas as to look with eyes turned towards the future rather than the past, who is less inclined to talk and criticise or complain than to act, is young for all the years that he may have lived. On the other hand, one who has no visions, no hope for the future, whose ideals are all of the past, who is content to live a self-complacent, self-centred life, who is unable to create and is ready to run down all novelties because they are such, is already old whatever may be the colour of his hair or the state of his health.

A true Devotee (2)

The relation of a *Bhakta* to his God is that of a guileless child to its mother. The child wants something, which it feels it cannot get of itself and runs to its mother and asks it of her. The mother to test the love of the little one pretends not to listen to its demands and goes on doing her work to see if the child begins to entertain a sense of hopelessness. All the time she is not, however, unmindful of the little one's requirements. She knows what it wants and also when and whence to supply it. So also is the case with the true devotee of God. He keeps asking God, in his prayers, to give him this and to supply him with that. But God does not pay attention to the prayers for some time and goes on testing the *Bhakti* of his devotee to Him. Men with little faith are apt to be disappointed when subjected to such a trial but a true *Bhakta* is not disappointed in the least. Like the little child who keeps pestering its mother till its object is achieved and does not show uneasiness at the apparent inattention of its mother to its demands, the man of faith keeps on praying, believing that his prayer will be answered. And how very great and immeasurable is his joy, when the answer comes. A true and sincere prayer is always answered though there may be

a little delay in doing it, only one should not give way to hopelessness and should have his faith in God's goodness strengthened with every minute of the delay. —V. S. S.

The True Scope of Religion

Men have sought religion from different motives. First, there are those whose chief interest in religion lies in the fact that it supplies answers to the fundamental questions with regard to the nature of God, the world, the soul of man and their relation to each other. The chief object of religion, according to them, is the satisfactory reply that it gives to the main problems of the universe and life. The mind of man has this peculiarity in its constitution that it can detach itself from its present sensations of the external world, and rise above and go behind them and ask "Whence is all this?" From this question arise other fundamental problems about the universe and life, which require satisfactory solution, before man can be truly happy. Ancient religious teachers and law-givers felt the force of this and went about giving replies to these fundamental questions, many of which were quite fanciful and have been found to be erroneous in the light of the discoveries of modern science. Ancient teachers in their ignorance included many questions that properly belonged to the domain of science into the domain of religion and thereby laid the door open for the present conflict between the teachings of ancient religion and those of modern science. But there is a large section of religious thinkers who though discarding, what we may properly call, the Puranic function of religion, yet hold that the main work of Religion is to give truly philosophical solution of the problems relating to the essence of things. By nature and habit, they find delight in such speculation, and they largely confine religious thought to them. These speculations in our country pass under the name of Tatva-vidya. The communication of right knowledge on that subject is the main function of religion, according to them, and they view religion from the standpoint of knowledge. All our ancient books known as Vedant come under this head. All of them teach the doctrine of knowledge. "Enable man to attain true knowledge" say they, "to distinguish the permanent from the impermanent, and they will rise

above "Avidya" or illusion that keeps them within the thralldom of the impermanent, in other words, they will be saved."

These men, by a natural process, attach the greatest importance to the purely doctrinal and intellectual aspect of religion, and have a sort of contempt for the emotional and practical aspects of it.

Then, there is a second class, who view religion from the standpoint of the government of passions. They consider that the main function of religion is to enable man to successfully control his desires. The religion of Buddha and of such Masters as Socrates and Confucius as well as the religion of the Stoics of ancient Greece and Rome, come under this head. Here in India numerous sects have arisen, who have preached this gospel and practised the severest austerities as a means to attain this end. viz., self-control.

The third class consists of those who have sought in religion a sentimental gratification for their hearts. Religion is a source of joy, say they, and its highest function is to elevate and immerse the mind of man in eternal bliss. These have been known in history as the *Mystics*. They have indulged in flights of imagination and emotional ecstasies.

A few words about this Mysticism. On the one hand religion becomes dry and lifeless and fails to satisfy the human heart, if it is altogether devoid of this mystic and emotional element. But on the other hand, if mysticism is carried to excess, religion disengages itself, from active life and ceases as a potent influence over human character. As the drunkard seeks his strong drink not for the thing itself, but simply for the excitement that it affords, so the Mystic may seek the exercises of religion, not for the morally elevating influence that it may exert on the active life, but for the temporary elation that it may supply to the feelings. Hence it has been seen in India that many of the mystic sects have lived and flourished in the midst of moral decadence.

But any of those three views of religion does not represent the whole sphere of religious progress. The religion and living religion fosters all of them. It increases knowledge, exercises self-control, and is a source of joy to the soul. To be this however, religion must needs be the religion of Bhakti or the love of God. For when we truly love God, we approach in the right spirit the great problem

relating to His nature, His attributes and His relation to the world and to the soul of man. Tatva-vidya without this permeating love is blind. It wanders about in a labyrinth of speculations without finding means of escape. Love alone is the light that lightens the mind to enable it to solve the deep problems of the spirit. In the spiritual world it often happens, that wisdom that is hidden from the wise men of the world, is revealed to the loving and truthful child-heart.

Secondly, where there is sincere love of God, there is strength. The loving soul often passes through this life without even knowing its temptations. Purity comes to it naturally. Its absorption in the supreme, places it above many things, that need in others the severest self-control. The flow of pure and spiritual love in such a mind carries it naturally to things good and holy without its realising the sacrifice that it undergoes in doing so. Love is the fountain from which flow all right impulses and the subjugation of evil propensities comes in a natural process, as it were. Similarly, love is also a source of joy to the heart. This we witness even in the case of human love. What a source of gratification it is to hold intercourse with our friends. The soul finds itself at home with those whom it truly loves. When the soul truly loves God, communion with God becomes as natural to it as for the bird to fly in the air, or the fish to move in water. This exercise is both natural and pleasurable. It is a condition of supreme happiness to the spirit of man. It is not a temporary sentimental elation, but a pervading, permeating, and suffusing pleasure that strengthens the soul against all the inroads of external misery. It is this joy that the Rishis describe in the Upanishads as "Shaswat Shanti" or "Eternal Peace." —S. N. S.

Truth Told Lovingly

Truth alone conquers. "He who always speaks the truth" says Tukaram, "is an ocean of merit." Much depends on how it is told to make it attractive. There is an old saying according to which truth should be told lovingly. Merely speaking the truth in a blunt manner, has a bad effect on the hearer; it repels him from it. An artist who had painted a portrait of Ruskin was told that it flattered the original. His answer was "No, it is only the truth told lovingly"!

To be able to tell the truth lovingly we must be able to view it lovingly. God is truth, and how lovingly He expresses His character. His love is shown in actions of love; His beauty is expressed in the beauty of flowers; His wonderful majesty is made visible in the majesty of the mountain and the ocean. The truth of God is made known to man by Him in the pleasantest ways possible. We often feel, in our dealings with our friends and brothers that we have some truth to tell them. Have we really something to say? Then let us tell it in the sweetest way possible. If we can't do it, let us not tell it at all.

—V. S. S.

Prayer (7)

Perhaps my whole thought about prayer can be best summed up by a simple picture. Suppose that here is a child born into the home of a loving and excellent father and mother. The child grows up through infancy, childhood, youth to manhood, dependent all the while upon its parents, educated at the expense of its parents, everything possible done by its parents to make its life happy and noble. Will it not be a fitting thing for the child to recognise its parents, to be grateful to its parents, to appreciate their love and care, to desire to know them and to live on terms of dutiful obedience and affectionate intimacy with them?

Now change the picture a little and we have an essentially correct representation, as I think, of the situation of every human being upon the earth, as regards our relation to God. We are all as I believe, the children of an Infinite Love and Care. We are not here because of our planning. We did not create the world in which we live; we cannot sustain it for a moment of time. We did not create ourselves. We cannot furnish ourselves with a morsel of food or a breath of air except as we get it from a source beyond and above ourselves. Our little intelligences are, as it were, candles lighted from the Great Intelligence that shines through all the ordered wisdom of the worlds. Our heart's affections must have come from an infinite Love-Fountain. And so as we look about us and within us we find the situation to be essentially that which I have pictured: We are all His children; we have been born into a world which our Father has provided for us beforehand. This is our home. In this home we pass our earthly days.

Does it not seem fitting, then, that we should recognise the source from which we and the home have come? Is it not fitting that we should desire to know and return the Father-love, that has given us all? Is it not right that in our weakness we should seek help from Him who is Infinite strength?

I take it that something like this is what all true prayer means. If this is its meaning, certainly I for one cannot conceive anything more reasonable, or more beautiful, or more deeply due from man to his Creator and the Author of all good; or more deeply useful to himself, than prayer.

Our life-forces, both of body and spirit, tend ever to run low. God is the Life-Fountain, from whose infinite fullness we are constantly invited to draw the renewal of life. How? Through faith and prayer. We are none of us so wise, but that we need a divine hand to lead us on our way. Prayer gives us the grasp of such a hand.

We are none of us living lives so worthy, but that we need to hear every day a Divine Voice calling us to come up higher. Prayer opens the soul's ear to such a voice.

If any of us have foolish prejudices against prayer, caused by misunderstandings of what prayer is, let us put such prejudices aside. Let us look deeper. If any of us are indifferent to prayer, let us put away our indifference. Let us learn how sane a thing prayer is, as well as how sweet, how blessed, and how life giving.

And let us learn that it is for all—the young man in his strength or his temptation; the old man in his age; the mother in her anxieties; the child in his joy. Let us learn that it is not for the church alone, but for the home as well, and for all life. Above all let us learn that it is for the secret hour, when none is present but ourselves and God.

“ Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence can avail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take!
What parched ground refresh as with a shower!
We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!

Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
 Or others,—that we are not always strong ;
 That we are ever overborne with care,
 That we should ever weak or heartless be
 Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
 And joy and strength and courage are with Thee.

—J. T. S.

Regularity in Devotions

It is a law of the Universe that every action leaves behind certain effects which make the working of a similar action in future easier. Works which seem formidable at the outset are accomplished by a continuous repetition of the effort. Little drops of water destroy in course of time most gigantic rocks and little grains of sand build huge mountains. But the working of this law are more marked in the organic world than in the inorganic, because the actions of organic bodies are the results not only of forces from without, but also of those from within; and consequently every past action leaves them pre-disposed for the better working of a future one. Upon this quality depend all the modern achievements in agriculture and horticulture and in animal training. This principle lies at the root of "Natural Selection." How hard does the child find at first to lift itself up upon its legs; but soon the body learns to balance itself automatically and the child runs and jumps without having to do any conscious effort. In fact all the workings of what is called "Habit," whether normal or exceptional as in the case of acrobats and Yogis, are illustrations of this law.

This law holds good not only in the physical world, but also in the psychical. Even the workings of our senses afford a striking illustration. What is heard as mere noise at first, is perceived by a trained ear to be the sweet harmony of musical instruments or an impressive discourse eloquently delivered. The same object never presents itself twice in the same way to the same eye. All our learning depends on memory and memory is only another name for the working of this law in psychical region. And what is true in intellectual matters is also true in moral and religious. Every succumbing to a temptation leaves the soul morally weak and every

moral victory provides one with a fresh quota of moral strength. So again if one be anxious not to let oneself sink into the depths of worldliness and sin, it is necessary to pray frequently and to raise oneself above the turmoils of the world and enjoy communion with the Infinite and the Eternal. Every enjoyment of worldly pleasure creates a stronger attachment to the world, every fear of the misfortunes in this world makes the heart more faithless, every indulgence of self-love and self-conceit removes the soul farther from its God.

One reason why "Habit" has greater importance in psychical life than in physical is that, except while asleep, our minds are always at work; and unless our mental activity is directed in the right direction, we are sure to be led astray. There is no standing still in a spiritual life. We must move forward, or else we shall be carried backward. We must every now and then think of God and His holiness, otherwise not only will our spiritual progress be stopped, but we are certain to sink deeper into the ocean of worldliness.

Hence the supreme importance to all religious men of cultivating the *habit* of prayer and devotion. But to acquire this habit is by no means easy; there is everything in us and around us to turn us away from a life of prayer and trust in God. A persevering and continuous effort is needed, involving the necessity of setting apart fixed times for devotions, private as well as public. This is the reason why in all ancient religions daily duties are prescribed and special days are fixed for worship, pilgrimages and fasting. Indeed they always get mixed up with mythology and by fostering a spirit of superstition and ceremonialism defeat the good object they are likely to serve; but they witness to the need of observing certain rules with regard to the times of practising devotions.

To us holding liberal views in Religion it is of utmost importance that we maintain strict regularity in our devotions—in our personal and family prayers and also in our weekly attendance at the church—in our Brahma and Prarthana Samajes no law compels our observance of religious rites, no strict external discipline restrains our natural desires, no priest offers to bear our inward burden; each man among us stands or falls to his conscience alone. We stand face to face with God, neither priest, nor ritualism, nor church between. In this no doubt consists the glory of our faith; but the very splendour of our religion hides dangers of which we must be

particularly heedful. We lack aids on which multitudes of our brethren lean ; and therefore it needs a more single—hearted, more steadfast determination on our parts than on theirs to reach and maintain a religious life.

—V. S. S.

Truth is One

Creeds being human handiwork are relative to time and environments and, therefore, creeds cannot be construed to be eternal. Unfortunately, creeds have tended to be petrified and have led to hamper the growth of religious life. Do revere the creeds as historical relics by all means but make an earnest attempt to make your creeds living. Off and on, revise your creeds and that work is in harmony of the prophets who, on the whole, have been wiser than their zealous followers. Mere thinking leads to contradictions and that is why great prophets have emphasised knowledge of truth by leading the life. Though to many of us creeds are helpful there are bound to be a few to whom a creed is bound to be a positive hindrance. From this standpoint Religion cannot be plural. Truth is bound to be fundamentally one—there cannot be room for essential sects. Truth knows no barriers and Humanity has got one God to worship and one truth to translate in life.

—P. A. W.

Wisdom Tabloids (9)

Be inspired with the belief that life is a great and noble calling, not a mean and grovelling thing, that we are to shuffle through as we can, but an elevated and lofty destiny.

* * * *

Like leaves on trees, the race
of man is found,
Now green in Youth, now withering
on the ground.

* * * *

None can truly laugh without once shedding tears. The beauty of the full moon cannot be realized unless one experiences the darkness of the new moon.

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There is no good tormenting the body. Forsake that asceticism which makes a display of itself before men. Conceal asceticism within thy heart keeping up externally all the social observances.

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Asceticism begins in trouble, but ends in joy and is thus glorified.

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Asceticism purifies the heart, subdues passions, makes one eager to adopt vows and renders life agreeable.

Three Classes of Religious Thinkers

Three different classes of religious persons, have three different ways of looking at the main function of religion. One class thinks that the main function of religion is to convey spiritual knowledge to expound and illustrate spiritual truths. So they are always searching the religious books and the sayings of saints and sages for the acquisition of such truths ; and are always expounding them to others. The second class look upon religion as the observance of rules of conduct. So they are punctilious in the performance of the rules of spiritual exercise, and cry down as irreligion the least departure from them. The third class have the conception that religion must be a part of life, both internal and external, namely that it should enter into the thoughts, should colour the feelings, should influence the aspirations, and should mould the conduct of life. There is a good deal of difference between *knowing*, *doing* and *being*. A young unmarried girl is very fond of reading novels. The scenes of conjugal love please her and excite her. She has observed the strange manner in which that love influences the conduct of men and women, the self-sacrifice it evolves, the endurance it teaches, the singleness of mind and heart it engenders and so on. So that, she has become a tolerably good authority on the strange workings of conjugal love ; and has become almost an adept in its philosophy. Now there comes a time, when she herself falls in love, and goes through far deeper and more real experiences than those described in her novels. So long conjugal love was a subject of her knowledge ; now it is her life. Is not there, then, a difference between *knowing*

and *being* ? Please do not forget that in religion also, there is difference between knowing and being. An expert in religious philosophy is not necessarily a religious man.

Similarly, there is also difference between *doing* and *being*. I have engaged a nurse, for instance, to take care of my baby ;—to do the duty of a mother to it. She is a clever nurse and does more for my baby than its mother could ever have done. She is careful and punctual in the performance of her duties. The baby is washed, cleansed, dressed, rocked, without omission. But do you consider that performance of duties equal to maternal love ? The nurse has all the external acts of a mother minus *maternal love*. Such is the difference between *Religion in acts* and *religion in life*. One may be very exact in the performance of religious duties, yet true love of God, may not reside in him. Ah, that true love of God ! What is it ? How does it influence men's minds and hearts, and their conduct of life ? Without it, the talk of religion is mere pedantry and the exercises of religion are mere fatiguing pageantry. Let us all pray incessantly and earnestly for that true love of God, for it is always a *gift*.
—S. N. S.

Pray without Ceasing

Whoever rejoices in God is a mystic. It is an error to imagine that there is a sharp conflict between mysticism and the duties of life. Let us think of the many devout men we have known whose way of living has been such as to show that with them the dominant aim of life has been to act according to the will of God in all things and who have faced the trials of life with unwavering faith in the Divine goodness. There cannot be such loyalty to God without access to the Divine presence. To those who have once heard the voice of God in the soul, an attitude of prayer is perfectly natural, and it becomes quite easy for them to preserve this attitude amidst the various pursuits of an active life. While the mysticism of a St. Francis may belong to only a select few among the seekers of God, we think it a very practicable thing to follow the precept "Pray without ceasing." Every act done in a spirit of obedience to God is a prayer. Until we have attained the peace which we cannot have

without realising the Divine presence within and without us, let us seek God constantly with the agony of earnest supplication.

Faith (3)

With the word that has played and is still playing a large part in the history of the world we are all familiar. That word is Faith. It is the fuel that has fed and is still feeding all human activities. The story of man's progress from barbarism to civilization is the story of the triumph of faith over what to logic and reason seemed as insuperable obstacles. In the infancy of his race, man stood awestruck and trembling before the forces of nature. He has now triumphed over some of them and hopes to triumph over many more in course of time. This triumph is as much the result of the advance of scientific knowledge as it is of that faith which brought this knowledge within the reach of man. Man is ever on the move—either backward or forward. Life is a battle. According to one writer, Life is a continuous adventure into the unknown. Human activities, broadly speaking, may be divided into four classes—physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual. We look upon the intellectual activities of man as of a higher order than his physical activities. To his moral activities we allot a place higher than that which we give to his intellectual activities. And to the spiritual we give the highest place among all his activities. Religion, in its broadest sense, regulates all these activities. But it lays its strongest emphasis on the spiritual. And all religions, as we know, are founded on **Faith**. With *the faith* enjoined by different religions we are not at present concerned. **Faith** which is the foundation of all religions is also the soul of all human activities. "A man's action" says Emerson "is only the picture-book of his creed."

Faith, says the sceptic, is superstition. And Religion, he adds, is superstition in fashion. We need not be disturbed by what the scoffer and the sceptic may have to say in regard to religion. Because the man who calls himself an atheist, or an agnostic, or a rationalist has also a philosophy of faith of his own. His quarrel with Religion is that its **Faith** does not agree with his. We have

said above that Life is a battle. It means that we are perpetually engaged in a struggle which may or may not end in our favour. In order, therefore, to fight the battle of life, be its issue what it may, faith is absolutely necessary. Because if man is not to lose heart and give up the struggle, he must believe that the issue of the struggle will be in his favour, even though visibly the battle may be going against him. It is this something in man which makes him hope against hope and enables him to see the silver lining in the darkest cloud, that is the chief ingredient of what religion calls Faith.

And without acknowledging their debt to religion do we not see daily statesmen, journalists, scientists, agitators and even the blatant rationalists using the word Faith in the sense identical with that of religion? What does the political or the social reformer mean when he talks of his "faith in his principles"? Does he not mean something as vague and undefinable as what the man of religion means when he talks of his "faith in God" or of his "faith in the efficacy of prayer"? Faith of some kind or in something is absolutely necessary for a man if he is to live his life worthily as a member of society, whether he believes or does not believe in God as the Supreme Ruler of the Universe.

What is Faith? Can we define it? Faith like Truth is undefinable. Faith, says the Bible, is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen. In ordinary language this means that it is something in man which gives the general of an army or the leader of a movement, the hope, nay, positive assurance, even when everything is going against him, that in the end victory will be his. It is that something in man which gives him, in his moments of darkest trials, vision to see the sunshine of hope looming on the distant horizon and thereby endows him with courage to bear his trials with patience and gives him patience to wait till the clouds disperse. It is that something in man which always takes note more of the invisible than of the visible factors in life.

Even if he wishes it or wills it man cannot live without faith. As a member of society he has to take his wife, his friends, his relatives and his children on trust, that is to say, in the hope that the wife, the friends, the relatives and the children will all fulfil the

expectations that he may have formed of them. Life is full of uncertainties. All human activities are subject to change and chance. One may be in perfect health today. The morrow may find him in the grip of a fell disease. One may be in possession of full intellectual vigour to-day. An accident, any day, may take the finest intellect in the world to the verge of insanity, nay, it may even reduce it to insanity. That these things do not happen every day does not disprove the possibility that they may happen any day to any one of us. If our faith is of the right kind it must answer to the following description of Faith given by Tennyson :—

“She sees the Best that glimmers thro’ the Worst.
 She feels the sun is hid but for a night,
 She spies the summer thro’ the winter bud,
 She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,
 She hears the lark within the songless egg,
 She finds the fountain where they wail’d ‘Mirage’ !

Even those who do not feel the necessity of faith in its religious sense use it daily in business and in the management of men and things. “It is faith in something” says Oliver Wendell Holmes “which makes life worth living.” Let us, therefore, ever bear in mind the inspiring words of Robert Louis Stevenson, who bore with courage and patience the trials that his ill-health forced upon him and continued working to the last day of his health. Says Stevenson “Whether on the first of January or the thirtyfirst of December, faith is a good word to end on.” Because Faith gives us hope and courage, and whispers in our ears, when despondency, takes possession of our mind, that man never is but always to be blessed.

The Individual and his Society

We are all so habitually absorbed in whatever appertains exclusively to ourselves as to forget how much the affairs of others are often our own. For want of such enlightened notions of self-interest, public activity among us will often rest itself on merely personal ends, and spend its force on such branches of reform as will ensure their gratification. And yet, the interests of the individual

and his society touch one another at so many points that the happiness and the progress of the one are largely made up of those of the other. In the affairs of families, such intimate connection between its different members will be readily admitted. For it is common experience, that the physical suffering of one, or his moral obliquity tells on the peace of mind as well as the health of the body or the vigour of the moral faculty of all. It may be that the infection pervades the family atmosphere, or love itself will distribute the load of misery and vexation over the whole family. And in the large affairs of society, the case is much the same and sickness, poverty and distress do not exhaust themselves by attacking individuals singly. Rather do they spread from individual to individual till they reach quarters the most remote from their place of origin. Ignorance and crime likewise exact their penalties from even the literate and the guiltless. A large portion, for instance, of the machinery of Government for which all have to pay, is after all a protection afforded to all against the inevitable mischiefs of the ignorance and poverty or the selfish and wicked proclivities of some. Very often a bad example seeks to propagate itself and one wrong act generally breeds another. In this way, all classes and trades are pervaded by an atmosphere of petty aims, dishonest practices or professional and class jealousies, so much so, that the superior order of people in each find it burdensome to make their way in life, or continue in their straight ways and high aims. In more ways than one, the individual is thus at the mercy of his society. He thinks and acts and lives and moves and is happy or miserable just as society makes him. His happiness and advancement are indeed bound up with the happiness and the acts and thoughts of his neighbours. This being so, no body can afford to be a passive spectator of what happens around him, if he does not wish to injure himself or mar his happiness and his prospects. If the ignorant ryot, for instance, struggles with poverty or is worried by the tax-gatherer and is preyed upon by the money-lender, is it no concern of any of his better-placed countrymen to see that he is set up on his own legs, with power to adapt himself to circumstances and in possession of higher aims than the pressing needs of the hour? Ignorance and poverty have already killed all sense of self-respect in him, he possesses neither enterprise nor moral resource. But though reduced to a mere instrument like his plough, he needs to have his status

improved, if any body can do it and the whole country will reap the benefit, enrich his prosperity, his patient labour and his independence of circumstances. In the same way, the morality of trades and professions, the relations of classes towards each other, and towards individuals, are matters of vital concern to all members of society, of all classes and divisions. Indeed, society is an organisation which needs the support of all its parts to enable it to discharge its functions with efficiency and success. If any single part happen to be weak or diseased, it will drain the resources of all the rest and become a drag on them all. Similarly the predominance of particular classes and men may prove as fertile a source of mischief as a swollen limb does in the body, which has starved its neighbours of their due share of nourishment, and has itself lost its vigour of action in the bargain. The social organisation cannot tolerate such oppression and domination without crippling its general efficiency and power to advance. In this way, every one of us has an individual life of his own, to live which is peculiarly his, as well as a social life which he shares in common with his neighbours. He has social ends to pursue no less than individual. And in proportion as he rises to a more and more distinct consciousness of the former, he loses his devotion to the latter and enters on a life which is vaster and richer, than his merely personal ends can admit of. In ceasing to live for himself, he becomes truly human and assumes his human responsibility. "For none of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself."

The Religion of the Spirit

First of all, discover for yourself certain definite grounds of faith. For you must have strong definite religious faith which will suffice. Cardinal Newman once said "we must have dogmas." Yes, we must have dogmas in the rational sense of firm and definite belief and not faith in tradition and authority. Again, do not start with the belief that you have a religion. Ask yourself the question whether you as an individual, have any *personal* ground from experience. You need not be ashamed of a weakness in faith, for there is fidelity to truth and courage in acknowledging it.

There are some people who say that "religion is morality touched with emotion" and there are others who say that it is a power

making for righteousness. But we must have in religion more than the two elements. We must not rest satisfied with that alone. For as Coleridge says "all true religion must be based on revelation." Yes, without revelation there cannot be true religion. But what do we mean by revelation? It is not a revelation made to a prophet or a seer who lived two hundred years ago. It is not what we find in books and scriptures. It is the revelation made by God to the individual worshipper the revelation made direct to the human soul. *That* is the beginning of all true religion. God is the Self-Revealer. You cannot describe the method by which one can have revelation. It is secret, marvelous and wonderful. It cannot be described, it can only be felt. Other things may help us to understand God. The wonderful order in the universe and the beautiful and lively signs of nature give but a distant idea and are nothing besides God's own self-revelation to an individual, which makes him feel that he is the immanent Reality."

But why should we worship God? It is not quite sufficient that we should have faith in him and that we should believe in his existence? Some such questions rise in the minds of some theists. My only answer is that just as the eye loves to dwell on a fair form, just as the ears delight in melodious strains, just as the tongue appreciates a sweet delicacy and just as the nose delights in delicious fragrance, so does the human soul thirst for and enjoy communion with the soul divine. There is no higher joy than that. There is no higher and nobler blessedness than when you are at the feet of God. Prayer is not the uttering of words, but it is the natural turning of the face of the soul towards the heavenly father who ever helps us. The little child turns towards the loving mother so does our soul seek communion with God our father. Prayer is a natural, spontaneous, irresistible impulse of the soul, for in the presence of the Heavenly Father you feel secure and calm and serene.

Very often it so happens that a reply is not vouchsafed for a long time to our prayer. We are apt to judge hastily when we are most despondent. But soon the message comes and joy spreads over our whole being. The bruised heart becomes cheerful and happy. Once more then remember that under discipline only, can you have a spiritual life and also remember that the source of all blessedness and peace lies in righteous endeavour.

—H. C. M.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy

There are always two ways of looking at the past. The one is the way of the antiquarian. And the other that of the idealist and social reconstructor. The antiquarian looks at the past because of his delights in the things themselves without any ulterior aim. The idealist turns to the past because to him the knowledge of the past is a sure emancipation. Those who look at Raja Ram Mohan Roy, as antiquarians examine specimens in a museum, may find much to delight in his career. But they will miss the deepest truth of his life, and are perhaps likely to look upon him only as a pigmy. Those alone will appreciate his worth who know to turn to him as idealists and real workers.

Time is gone by to theorise about Ram Mohan's life. To the real student of his work, his life-work stands as the light of the central Sun, diffusing warmth, life, and fertilizing energy all over the field from one end of the country to the other. Because the influence of the sun is so permeating, steady and continuous, people fail to realize what a power for good it constitutes in the economy of Nature. Why, a hurricane that suddenly sweeps along, raising clouds of dust, rooting up trees, and speeding along in its work of devastation, certainly, for the time being, seems mightier than the Sun. It is like a giant shaking its limbs and making the Earth tremble. But after all the hurricane has to disappear and the central Sun comes out of the cloud and shines bright and clear. Well may the hurricane, rain and cloud of dust, think that they are mightier than the Sun. But to the earth they are abnormal. It is the Sun that is the *norm* of her life. So also as regards the relative influences and potentiality for good of our great men. Some sweep along like hurricanes, others shine steady, bright and serene like the Central Sun. The hurricane and the storm are a negative aspect of the life of the Earth. The Sun is its very soul. But for the Sun, the Earth would shrivel up and perish. In human history both have their places, but let us not forget that the Sun is the more important. Now in the modern history of India, the influence of Raja Ram Mohan Roy is like that of the Sun, mightiest in the mightiest. And just because it is so great, people have failed to notice it, though they are reaping the fruit thereof and will continue to reap it for many, many years to come. There is not a single movement working itself



Ram Mohan Roy

Raja Ram Mohan Roy

out in our midst of which his mighty force has not been the originator. And that movement will alone fructify which draws its energy from that central source. His work was all inclusive and many-sided, and was essentially of an organic character. Ram Mohan Roy was not a sentimentalist, a mere enthusiast. That is why his work for the regeneration of his country will not appeal to those whose stock in trade is nothing firmer than sentiment. Sentiment is cheap and catches easily. While the light of reason is slow to make itself felt. Sentiment hurries along, and would finish up the work of a century in a few years. And this quick transformer of the life of humanity naturally gets a very great following. But a man of sentiment only takes up programme after programme to drop it half-way. He knows not how to plan for a good long time. And the demoralization that succeeds the failure of his hopes spells the despair and ruin of national life for a long time. Such was not the work of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He worked for the building up of New India on the foundations of a rock. And that rock was of higher Nationality and a universal ideal of worship. Be it remembered always that Ram Mohan Roy was not an echo of his times. He saw far ahead and in very many cases had to fight hard against the spirit of the age. The battle of English education, of a free press, of social emancipation, of the moral uplift of the manhood and womanhood of India, of justice, truth and righteousness, of equal status for Indian with the foreigner, of equitable revenue arrangements, of the unity of faith that was the synthesis of the old and the new, not only in Hinduism, but in Islam, Christianity and other faiths, of economic regeneration, of the co-operation between the children of the soil and the foreigner, was fought by him single-handed working up against the spirit of the age. In politics, in the field of social and educational work, in literature, life and religion of men, there was a thick and encircling gloom ; superstition, ignorance, prejudice, love of ease and lack of organized effort held the field. And in a short working career of twenty years he made a headway that is a miracle. Nothing short of genius enabled him to plan so far ahead, nothing short of super-human spiritual strength enabled him to lay deep and wide foundations for the building up of the mighty superstructure of Indian national life that we see today. It is the work of an Atlas supporting the burden of an entire continent on his shoulders. No wonder the Sisyphuses of the day think him so poor because he is steady, while

they keep on rolling up stones that as surely roll down. And what was the central principle of that full-orbed work? It cannot be better given than in the words of an old song. "Be strong of faith; make God your very own; praise or blame, reckon them not; let people talk as they may, be ye full of love. Cast off the spirit of mine and thine: accept light from wherever it comes; do not fasten your mind on selfish ends: work for the generation and union of humanity, because by working for God and humanity, you work best for your country; beware not to slacken, or be less vigilant; dispel doubt and despair; unite, harmonize and work on; for age comes; and decadence may overtake you and swallow you up; make God the centre and circumference of your life."

Ram Mohan Roy is great because his ideal was great; and because he dug broad and deep for the laying of the foundations of that ideal. He was neither for the East, nor for the West, but he was for a higher synthesis brought about by the complete union of the two. He was the first to make it, like Columbus discovering America. He started an English School; he never attempted to shut up a single. And he also founded a Vedantic College. He wrote and spoke in the Vernacular; but he never despised the foreign tongue. He was not only well versed in Bengali and English, but in Arabic, Persian, Greek, Hebrew, and French. He was a widely travelled man from one end of India to the other and beyond it. He saw the seething life of humanity at first hand, and that convinced him that the regenerating influence to India could only come through contact with the energetic and the more positive foreigner. He loved liberty, but he also loved order. He was a revolutionist in his own way; because everyone who brings about such an enormous change in outlook is a revolutionist. But he was not a revolutionist of the Robespierre type, that is one who was a theorist, every theory of whom was killed by a fact. His mind was essentially historic and had sense of the size and mass of great movements. His mind never worked in the vacuum of abstract rights. He was for knowing and weighing every movement, every question, every problem in the light of its history, of the conditions of the day, and also by the permanent tests of Justice, Righteousness, Love and the promotion of Good. He believed in the goodness of life, and worked for making it brighter, easier, and a little less gloomy for those around him. And

to all he appealed to turn to the solace of the heart which lies in the Worship of God in spirit. His hymns reveal the sustaining force of his life; his writings show how broad and deep was his outlook on life, his actual work shows that he was no mere theorist but a practical reformer. No mere visionary, but he had the grandest of all the visions of the India to be; no mere politician, but he worked with greater and more thorough going attention to details, with a truer insight into constitutional precept and practice, and with an eye straight to the thing to be done, than any politician could have done; he was no recalcitrant opponent for opposition's sake and yet he was keen on maintaining his rights and the rights of his countrymen; without an atom of superstition about him, he was not a mere scorner of things past; no deist or intellectualist but a man full of the spirit of reverence and piety; no journalist he of the type so common to-day; he proved himself the wielder of the most powerful pen in the propagandist work he did by his magazine and newspaper; no literature of the jejune type, his productions rank, in chaste and pure and restrained style, as equal to any produced in them other tongue by the best writers of his day. He was the father of Bengali prose. No stickler for formula or ceremonialism, he yet believed in the worth of social, moral and religious discipline and regimen, as may be seen from a special pulpit built in front of his house, for offering prayer there—the prayer of the Gayatri—three times a day. Light and more light, intellectual light, light on the perplexed problem of moral and social duty, and the illumination of the spirit that alone can bring one nearer to God; these he strove for. And because inwardly he equipped himself so thoroughly, understood the responsibilities of life so wisely, and strove to the utmost of his strength caring neither for pelf nor power, to keep his head sound, his heart warm and his intellectual gaze clear, that he could give to the world abundantly, of his life.

The members of the Church which he founded have this duty laid upon them, namely, to carry his message far and wide, in the village and in the school; in the cottage of the peasant and the dingy room of the factory worker; in the midst of a people where superstition still reigns supreme, and to those also who clamour for political rights without knowing what their duties are to those whom they are treading underfoot. To the ruler no less than to the subject, to the politician

no less to the social reformer, to the educated and the ignorant; to the economic reformer and to the religious enthusiast; to every one of them. Ram Mohan Roy's work and writings have something to teach, to know from and plan upon. And in their little circle of members and friends, the more they assimilate their lives to his teaching, preferring the discussion of work to that of personalities, extending activities in the direction of better education of the head and the heart, coming together and helping each other more thoroughly and more heartily, basing all upon the bed-rock of love, communion, wisdom and work, the better will they be able to appreciate his message and diffuse the light all over the country. —V. N. N.

Calamities as Faith Tonics

When such terrible catastrophes as floods and earthquakes occur, the faith of even the strongest among us is apt to receive a rude shaking. What does all this destruction mean and why should a God who is just and merciful, mete out such horribly cruel punishment to his children who apparently are as good as all the others who have not been subjected to such a punishment? Is the God who can be so cruel, really, a loving and merciful father as we believe, he is? These and similar questions suggest themselves to all who come to know of these calamities and they shake if not actually destroy the faith which men have in the justice and love of the Creator.

Now in the first place it is wrong to suppose that the calamities which God sends upon us are in the form of punishment. A correct understanding of God's real motive in subjecting man to the dreadful catastrophes will make it clear that calamities like earthquakes or floods or fires are no more in the nature of punishments than the various forms in which death comes to man in the ordinary course of life. No doubt the desolation which such calamities bring about is swift and sudden and therefore leaves a profound impression upon the mind. But beyond that there is no difference between them and the ordinary accidents to life which we witness in all large towns every day. Accidents when they are small and do not affect a large number of men often pass unnoticed without even so much as evoking an exclamation of sorrow or surprise from us. But when they take place on a

stupendous scale they touch our finer feelings, create a profound sense of sorrow in us and a sympathy for the afflicted such as nothing else would. Catastrophes small or large, happen, therefore, in the natural order of things and cannot be and are not at all sent upon man as punishment for his sins. The real motive or motives of God in subjecting men to these appalling trials are to strengthen their faith in Him in various ways. Let us therefore try to see how these accidents of enormous magnitude help to make our faith in God stronger instead of weakening it.

“One touch of nature makes the whole world akin.” Calamities, bring no doubt, a vast amount of pain and suffering with them, but do they not also result in tightening the bonds of human brotherhood of which we always keep talking in season and out of it? If there were no floods or earthquakes, if there were no suffering and sorrow on their account, how and why would our sympathy rush out to men and women—our brothers and sisters, whose face we have never seen nor about whom have we ever cared to know anything? We realise the existence of the brotherhood of man when our brothers and sisters suffer, and but for such calamities which bring on the suffering, all our talk about love and brotherhood would be unmeaning and vain.

Do not these calamities help us also to realise in a very striking manner the essential unity of the human race? And then above all, if the results of these calamities are to strengthen the bonds of love and sympathy which exist between man and man and to make man realise the unity of his race, if they are to strengthen his faith in the love and power of his Maker, who can say that the author of them is cruel or unmerciful? God is love and to those who have faith, His love is made manifest in things dreadful as in things pleasant. Greater the dread, more correctly do they read the beneficent purposes of the Maker in the horrors that He sends upon them.—V.S.S.

Service

The servant of God in every field of human activity is always a back-bencher. And it is well that it should be so. For service like virtue is its own reward. It is twice-blessed. For all growth is growth in character, and the best growth of character, the flowering forth of

the spiritual in man, comes of disinterested service. For service means love, self-sacrifice, humility and reverence, which are really the treasures of the spirit. Man has been sent into this world *not* to amass money for that he has to leave behind and it perisheth. He is here to acquire such *sanskars* as are abiding possessions; it is the spiritual quality of life that determines its worth in the eye of God. And that is best brought out by disinterested service and by that alone. That is why Tukaram has characterised it as the mark of a true saint. He says "*He alone is the true saint, who takes unto his bosom the care-worn and the woe-begone. God dwells with him alone who carries a tender heart within and without and who shelters the forlorn. Him alone do I revere as God on earth who feels as much for his servants as for his own children.*" Service is love, service is sacrifice; it is humility, reverence, patience and self-effacement. It is to be "lowly wise." Such service is prayer and prayer to God is sanctified only by service. Are we such faithful servants of God?

Wisdom Tabloids (10)

The path of Salvation lies through love and devotion, which transcend reason and intellect.

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Narrow is the lane of love. It cannot contain two. When enters the Lord, I cease to be. Where I am, the Lord enters not.

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The divine fire of the knowledge of God is hid in the heart of all human beings. The consciousness of the infinite goodness of God is written in effaceable letters in the souls of all men. We can see God when this hidden fire is kindled by the study of the universe. He has imprinted his image of pure goodness on all material things and on all human hearts. Those blessed, wise, pure, wakeful, great souls, who have been able to realise it, they are theists.

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The infinite spirit of God is not a limited entity. He is neither matter nor mind. Therefore mind cannot grasp Him. As mind cannot understand Him, for less can speech express Him. The mind in its efforts to comprehend Him comes back baffled; so also

speech in its effort to describe Him stops short. That infinite person can only be indicated as the mind of the mind, as the speech of the speech, as the conscious cause and stay of all. He who enjoys the supreme bliss of realising this absolute, all pervading God of bliss within himself, has attained the end of all his desires.

* * *

As the frightened child becomes re-assured when it reaches the bosom of the mother, so we overcome the fears of this terrible world when we find refuge in the bosom of the loving God spread all around. Then having known Him, the unseen but all-seeing, the uncontained but all-containing Lord of all, as our only one friend and helper, we resign ourselves unto Him and walk with undisturbed mind in the path indicated by Him, following His commands.

* * *

He who has no faith in the goodness of God and does not know His real purpose, though living within the unchanging beautiful order of the universe, is afraid like one living in a house full of darkness. But he who has seen the beneficent light of the perfect God of goodness spread over the universe, is never afraid.

* * *

Principles of Theism

Inquirer—What is your idea of God, and how do you know that He exists ?

Theist—God is the Intelligence or *Chit*¹ that is immanent in all the processes of nature. The universe is an organised existence. In the processes of nature I discern a purpose, an adaptation of means to ends, just as I see it in your actions ; and I infer the existence of a cosmic Intelligence, just as I infer the existence of a mind in you —of which you would consider it odd that I should ask for any elaborate proof, besides my instinctive inference.

In.—Do you not speak of God as Creator ?

Th.—Yes, in the sense that He is now and has always been the cause of those phenomena which we call the universe. Everything in nature is in a state of flux : it changes its “name and form.” Of

¹ Knowledge

the origination of its "substance" we know nothing. Creation, as we know it, is change of form.

In.—If God is an all-pervading Intelligence, why do you speak of it as a person, or Purusha? If, as a person, He is conscious of His self, as distinguished from not-self, why do you call Him Infinite?

Th.—He is a Person in the sense that He is *Chit*. The distinction of the Ego from a non-Ego which is substantially opposed to it, is not an essential element in the idea of Personality.

In.—Why should we concern ourselves with the Divine Purush?¹ Should we be any the worse for not thinking of Him?

Th.—Human progress would have been and will be impossible without man's maintaining "some elevating and sustaining connection with the Infinite, the Perfect, and the Eternal." Man *will* concern himself with God, and as Spencer, acknowledges, it is "not for nothing" that he has inherited that desire. As another evolutionist. Huxley declares, "every man ought to feel that reverence and love for the ethical ideal, and the desire to realise that ideal in life," which we call religion. It is the indispensable lever for the uplifting of the individual and the race.

In.—Why do you bring in the ethical ideal when you speak of God and religion?

Th.—The interpretation of the moral law as the will of God is part of religion.

In.—Can we not follow ethical ideals irrespectively of the consciousness of obeying the will of God?

Th.—If philosophic reflection leads us to the conclusion that in obeying the moral law we obey the will of God, it would be a strange kind of morality that deliberately tried to suppress a consciousness of the truth. Moreover, infractions of the moral law often inflict small injury, and are not noticed by our fellow-creatures. We easily reconcile ourselves to them, and small transgressions predispose us to greater ones. A vivid realisation, at the moment of temptation, that we shall be disobeying the will of a Higher Power by yielding, invests small transgressions with greater importance, and we abandon the easy leap over the wall. Then again, if you think of a moral law

as the physicist thinks of the law of gravitation, you lose the advantages of prayer; for you cannot pray to isolated commandments. Reverence or love for an ethical ideal is excited best when behind that ideal stands a supreme and majestic Personality.

In.—What, then, is your idea of prayer?

Th.—Prayer consists in “attuning our spirits to the Spirit of Righteousness.” In prayer we realise the universal immanence of the Divine Being and our dependence upon Him. We look within ourselves, perceive our weaknesses and sins, and sigh for improvement: we remember our duties to our fellow-creatures, and wish well for them. Prayer is an “attitude of mingled worship and supplication.” The realisation of the greatness of the immanent Ideal is worship: the desire to approach it is supplication. The purification of ourselves so achieved, saves us from sin. The Supreme Being, who works out between prayer and salvation the relation of cause and effect, is hailed by the worshipper as his Merciful Saviour, when he feels the joy of emancipation. Hence saint Tukaram has sung.

O save me, save, and set me free
 Thou Lord divine of infinite might !
 O let me to Thy presence flee,-
 And hug Thy feet with deep delight !

In.—By salvation do you mean only reformation of character in this life or do you believe that our existence continues after physical death?

Th.—The body only changes its form when it dies, and scientific analogy as well as the nature of our minds points to the practically certain conclusion that the mental life continues. In the words of a great man of science, Sir Oliver Lodge, “whereas our terrestrial life is temporary, our real existence continues without ceasing, in either a higher or a lower form,” and “the character and experience gained by us during our brief association with the matter of this planet, become our possession henceforth for ever.”

In.—Do you accept saint Tukaram as your authority? What are the principles of the church under whose auspices the quotations you make are compiled?

Th.—We follow no authority blindly, but endeavour to learn from the great teachers, prophets, and saints of all countries. The principles of the Theistic church in India, are as follow:—

God is the creator of this universe and its ruler. He is a spirit, all-pervading, omniscient, almighty, infinite, eternal, one without a second; the source of all good, all joy; holy, merciful, and the saviour of sinners.

His worship alone leads to happiness in this existence and hereafter. True worship consists in love and reverence for Him, praying to Him in spirit, doing all things according to His will. To offer services to images or other created objects is not a true mode of worshipping Him.

God does not incarnate Himself, and there is no book that is revealed by him or is infallible.

All men are His children, and they should behave towards each other as brethren without any false distinctions.

Blest is the land, and blest the race,
That lives of Hari's ¹ servants grace :
He sets their rites, their law is He ;
Through them are blest the regions three.
They know no rule of caste or birth ;
God's Shashtra ² makes all one on earth.
Count in all scriptures, Tuka says,
The countless saved by Hari's grace.

Dr. Hemchandra Sarcar

It was some forty years ago, that young Hem Babu came under the magnetic influence of that mighty organiser and leader of the Brahma Samaj, *Pandit Sivanath Sastri*. The ties that bound the two souls blossomed into discipleship on the part of young *Hemachandra*. He found his *guru* in Pandit Sivanath Sastri, and in 1891, when the latter started his Brahma worker's shelter, Hemchandra



Dr. Hemchandra Sarkar

joined it whole-heartedly. Later on, the Shelter was converted into *Sadhanashram* of which Pandit Sivanath, Babu Gurudas Chakravarty, and Hem Babu were the pioneer members. How much Hem Babu was moulded by Pandit Sivanath Sastri is more than we can say. It is enough to observe that the former inherited and imbibed all that was worth imbibing in the latter. About the later nineties, the Rev. Dr. Sunderland visited the different theistic centres in this country ; and marked Hem Babu out as a missionary and worker of great promise. He secured for him a Unitarian scholarship. This scholarship enabled Hem Babu to spend two years at Oxford in study and in equipping himself for what ultimately turned out to be his life-work.

As Mission Worker.

After his return from Europe, he was entrusted with the editing of the *Indian Messenger*, which work he did to the satisfaction of leading lights like Pandit Sivanath Sastri and Principal Hramchandra Maitra. The editorial activity of Hem Babu brought him into touch with the live issues affecting the aspirations and life of the educated people of the province. It could be regarded as nothing less than a concentrated type of mission activity ; and he came to be acquainted with the every-day needs of the populace—for whose edification, he was writing by day and musing by night. It was about this time, he was married to *Devi Suvarnalata*, who became his help-mate in every way ; she joined the *Sadhanashram* and worked with her illustrious husband. Perchance, Hem Babu's aptitude lay in other directions of evangelical work, and after he was freed from the editor's duties, he undertook extensive mission tours all over the country. May be, he had not the unique oratorical gifts of *Keshub* nor the apostolic fervour of *Sivanath* : but in earnestness of purpose and width of learning, few could equal him. Whenever he preached, his tone and face were an embodiment of zeal. His quiet accents in a melodious flow of polished English were highly charming. Verily, he was an illuminating preacher, who preached many sermons, which were harnessed to the one great theme of the *religion of love and truth in the liberty of the spirit, dwelling constantly, on Fatherhood of God, Brotherhood of man, and Immortality of the soul.* "He preached the need of man for God, the meaning of prayer, the quest of Divine

Beauty, and the spirit of love and fortitude in which to meet the trial and glory of the battle of life. Wherever he went, he made enduring friendships. Genial and cordial in his relations, simple in his habits, and humble in his outlook, he made a deep impression on congregations in general and workers in particular. His mission tour, however, produced great results in the Madras Presidency. It was owing to his influence that many *Samajes* and *Mandirs* have come into existence in South India. The present writer was initiated into Brahmoism some nine years ago by Hem Babu. In one of his talks he had remarked that the Deccani youth, being a level-headed youth was probably impervious to the call religious. I humbly suggested that it had been like that; but even the Maharashtra youth could be brought to the paths of religion by presenting him its implications on the background of the heritage of the life and teachings of the saints of the Province.

Writings and Projects.

Great though he was as a missionary, Hemchandra Sarcar was greater still as a writer. His mission work may come to be forgotten, except in the memory of a few; but the work he has done by writing his books will remain as long as Brahma Samaj will remain. The different treatises—small and big—have an abiding interest. Miss Collett's biography of Ram Mohan Roy was re-edited by him with a masterly introduction. His treatise on Anand Mohan Bose, the great patriot of Bengal and India, will ever remain a classic. In connection with the Brahma Samaj Centenary in 1928, he brought out a number of important religious publications like Ram Mohan's writings Vol. I, Teachings of the Upanishads, Life of Sivanath Sastri, and Religious Evolution. To our mind, the greatest service that Rev. Hemchandra Sarcar has rendered to the popularisation of the practice (*Anusthan*) of the Brahma Samaj in every home, is through his *Brahmo Prayer Book* and *Religion of the Brahma Samaj*. The latter booklet, especially, is universally considered to be the best manual to be placed into the hands of those who desire to know the doctrines and teachings of Brahmoism in brief. In recognition of these diversified services to the cause of theism rendered by Babu Hemchandra, the American Unitarians conferred upon him the degree D.D. on the occasion of the Centenary of the Brahma Samaj. Sivanath Memorial was the last project on which Dr. Hemchandra was

occupied. He laboured to complete it day in and day out. He has had the desire of his heart fulfilled, to see Sivanath Memorial completed only a month before his death. Gone is Dr. Hemchandra Sarcar to his eternal rest, leaving a rich legacy behind, in the form of his books, his vigorous mission-work, and a life-time devoted to the glory of God and the service of man.

Flowers

Who does not love flowers? But it is one thing to love them; it is another to learn from them. They teach us more than books or men. They are therefore the favourites of saints and poets. Take for instance, India's National flower—the lotus. Our poets use it as type of beauty and purity. Our saints borrow from it their best inspiration for life and conduct. When Tukaram prays to God, he asks for help to be made “like the lotus in the midst of water.” It grows in dirty water and mud—it is of them and yet above them. It extracts the soul of goodness in them; refuses to be tainted by their uncleanness; and opens to the skies, lives in the enjoyment of light from above—an emblem of calmness, purity, and love.

* *

Then there is our sun-flower which always turns to the side where the Sun shines—teaching us to live lives of sunshine, that is, be contented and cheerful in whatever situation we are placed, and diffuse smiles and happiness all around. That sun-flower is like the marigold, of which it has been said that, like Ulysses's crew, it takes the thunder and the sunshine with frolicsome glee.

* *

But these wayside flowers, that grow by the roadside in the country or bloom in fields or forests, are among our greatest monitors. Silent they bloom and are emblems of joyous submission and humility.

* *

All of us are not rich enough to cultivate gardens. But God is our Great Gardener; and if we are “all ear, all eye,” not engrossed in pleasures of the senses, he has provided the garden of Nature for us

all, however poor we may be. "Flowers," says one truly, "are the poor man's gifts from above. They are the poor man's poetry as birds are the poor man's music."

* *

Of all flowers those that, like our lotus, grow and flourish, shine and shed their light, laugh and live, and worship, are our best teachers. Look at the white lily and hear what the holy-minded Thoreau, who lived in the midst of Nature says of it. "Growing in stagnant and muddy water, it bursts up so pure and fair to the eye and so sweet to the scent as if to show us what purity and sweetness reside in and can be extracted from the slime and muck of earth. It is the resurrection of Virtue."

* *

"It is remarkable," writes Thoreau, that those flowers which are most emblematic of purity should grow in the mud. Yes! So it is. Hence Tukaram prayed to God to plant him on this Earth as the lotus is planted. To live in the world, mix among men, and untainted by the vices and temptations of the senses, to grow in character—truth, light and love, and be patient, humble and chaste—that is to be a *man*; otherwise we are worse than brutes. Oh! the language of flowers more than their beauty! How God in His beneficence has provided standards for our true growth in Nature's forms and laws. And yet we heed not and live lives of listlessness and conceit!

—N. G. C.

Life's Mission

Companionship and mutual sympathy are the indispensable factors of wordly life. It will not do for us to say that we shall have nothing to do with our neighbours, but shall traverse the path alone, unfriended, without help or company. Man by his very nature is a social animal, and must need the hand of his brother in every little thing. He turns to him for his love to gladden his heart, for his sympathy to comfort him, his knowledge to enlighten him, and his help to guide him, and in turn, he gives him what he can according to his capacity and strength. He wants the world and the world wants him. Nor is this all; man does not live in the world for

himself alone, but owes a duty to his neighbour as much as to himself—duty of love and service. It is the twofold bond of love and service that binds together man and man. Our purpose in life is not primarily to achieve great things, nor is it given to everybody to perform deeds which will carry his fame far and wide. It is not great deeds, but each little act of kindness and love inspired by the spirit of service that builds our character and life-work. Life is given to love and is made sublime by service; and that love is highest, that service is noblest, which is accompanied by surrender of the self in which lies the fulfilment of our actions and aspirations. In sacrificing our own interests for the service of our fellowmen, we shall only prepare the ground for still nobler ones, and in “losing life for others, we shall but gain it.”

Wisdom Tabloids (11)

Nothing would have happened, nothing would have existed without God, the Creator and the Lord of all. He is the life of all. Whether it be the moving sun and moon, or the growing trees and creepers, or the strong beasts and birds, He is manifested in all these beings, as their cause, (creator) their refuge, as their life.

* * *

God is one and incapable of comparison. There is nothing with which He can be compared. He is different from all things. He is beyond space, yet remaining within space. He regulates all events.

* * *

God has been ruling the Kingdom of the universe by establishing such firm laws that the world can never be destroyed by their change. God holds up all like a dam so that the worlds cannot be dispersed.

* * *

Oh, Beloved! Let there not be an interval between your soul and the supreme soul who is the inmost of all. Do not pine away in distress by separating yourself from Him. But having purified your

soul, carry it near Him and with single-mindedness hit the supreme soul with it and enjoy the supreme bliss born of spiritual union.

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There is no possibility of realising the supremely Holy Person until sinful desires and evil habits have been completely eradicated.

Prayer (8)

Prayer becomes a mere superstition, when it continually moves in the same groove. We go to church to pray, but what do we ask of our God in our prayer? We ask Him to save us, affirming before Him that we are miserable sinners and wretched beings! Yes, we may be so, but mere repetition of what we are is no cure for that kind of state of our being. As Theodore Parker puts it, this form of prayer "keeps the steam-engine always fanning and blowing itself, perpetually firing itself up, while it turns no wheels but its own and does no work but feed and fire itself." Reiterating the cry of misery and wretchedness is like the firing and feeding of the steam-engine, without acquiring the power of overcoming the evil. It is moreover unmanly to do so. Prayer, therefore, not to assume the form of superstition, must be not merely manly, but powerful enough to enable him who offers it to rid himself of the offences against God of which he is conscious.

—V. S. S.

Religion, the Foundation of all Progress

What a diversity do we daily perceive in the fortunes and circumstances of humanity! One man has to work the whole day to earn his bread. From early in the morning till late in the night he has to work at the untiring machine in the mill. The poor labourer toils the whole day to earn the wherewithal to keep his body and soul together. On the other hand there is the man rolling in gold and rushing in motor-cars. He attends office a few hours every day or not at all; and every thing appears to be working for his comfort and ease. The observation of such contrasts, sympathy with the suffering and toiling masses and disgust at the selfishness and indifference of the millionaire has led men to devise diverse schemes

for the equal distribution of wealth. The Communist would like to see all wealth held in common. The Socialist would urge that all the large productive works and means of acquiring wealth should be owned and managed by the state. But will man be truly happy if all these projects are carried out? If every man has an equal amount of wealth, if all his physical wants are duly satisfied, will he be really uplifted?

These theorists have failed to take a comprehensive view of life. They have looked upon man more or less as a food-devouring automaton. To make man really happy something more than a redistribution of wealth is required. That something will be found in the inner life of man, "No Utopia, however skilfully organized, could save the human race without much inward development on the part of each individual." The development of character is supremely important, even for the enjoyment of the wealth that is secured to him in peace and harmony. Man will attain his real dignity, when he realises his moral greatness and the necessity that is laid upon him of conforming to an inexorable moral law.

But the building of character becomes difficult, nay impossible, so long as we confine ourselves to a purely secular view of life. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Man is weak and needs help. The higher the ideal he sets before him the more difficult does he find it to reach it by falling back on the categorical imperatives of ethics. His temptations, his selfishness, which to a large extent brings about the misery described above, are too strong to allow him to make the sacrifices necessary for the attainment of his moral standard, utilitarian or otherwise. He must discern the presence of a power which in its infinite mercy is ever ready to help him to reach his ideal. He must learn to seek the loving Father who is watching over him in all his distress and misery. "Morality thus cries for religion out of the depth of its own necessity."

To achieve real progress, the whole fabric of civilization must therefore be subordinated to the service of man's soul. It is the inner man whose elevation must be the first consideration in all schemes for the well-being of humanity. And it is religion that will enable man to solve the various complicated problems of life by withdrawing his attention from what is transitory and superficial and

fixing it on the eternal and permanent. And it is religion that will bring to pass a harmonious and all-embracing development of man's soul.

Problem of Life

According to biologists human life, as we find it, is evolved from the primitive protoplasm. In the various forms of life that are the predecessors of the physical life in man the only principle at work is mere animalness. There is no antagonistic element to oppose the animal instincts ; hence there is no conflict and no problems arise. The sole governing law of mere physical life is a search for means for perpetuating itself. Similarly there would be no problems, where there is only moral and spiritual life as in some imaginary superhuman beings. It is only to man, who partakes of both these kinds of existences, that problems present themselves for solution. They arise out of the necessity to harmonise the demands of the elements in his life, the physical and the spiritual. The term "physical life" when used with reference to man may be employed to convey a much wider meaning than in the case of animals. To convey the extended meaning in English would require many words. It is aptly summed up in the Sanskrit word "*samsar*." This physical life of man includes his own life plus all its extensions in the shape of family, caste, religion, society, nation and so on. It is all that a man can speak of, as "my" or "mine." It is, what the psychologists call, the empirical ego in its largest extension. In some men this ego does not proceed beyond the personal self. In others it does not proceed beyond the circles of the family and the caste. In others it extends as far as their religion. Among modern nations it is bounded by the interests of the country. But whichever form it takes, it is a development of the ego along the line of physical life ; and the most civilised man in this respect is the direct lineal descendant of the ape and the tiger. But there is another thread interwoven in man's life. It is, what we call, moral, ethical and spiritual and is the very antithesis of the physical or biological. To know, to realise itself by losing itself is the great ideal, which this spiritual principle in man, places before him. It is the double craving in man for self-assertion and for self-sacrifice produced by the two warring elements, which gives rise to

the problems of life. The germ of this conflict exists in all human beings though it rages in all its intensity only in a few. This conflict is essential to the spiritual development of man.

As to the way in which these problems can be solved, tradition represents some of the greatest spiritual heroes as having taught that the conflict can cease only by withdrawing from the world. Physical life, the selfish desires will have no scope when we retire from the world. But if we leave out their reported sayings and look to their lives, we find that they themselves did nothing of the kind. Christ went about doing good. Buddha insisted on work. The ancient *Rishis* of India were householders actually engaged in the duties of life. They faced the world boldly and did not shrink from it. We are entitled to attach more importance to their practice than to their reported precepts. Precepts are often torn from the context, in which they were uttered and are hence misleading; and we can only learn their real significance from the actual life of the preceptor.

"Know yourself" is a great maxim. But a man can truly know himself only by action and never by contemplation. It is an axiom of psychology that the knower in us cannot know itself, that the cognitive principle in us cannot throw light on itself, on its nature and composition. It is only by action that we realise ourselves. A man may talk bravely and he may even believe all that he says. But when the time for action comes, he will reveal his real nature to himself, if not to the world. Hence a life of action alone will lead to true self-knowledge and to true spirituality. Let us not delude ourselves with the belief that the problems of life can be solved, the conflict between the two selves harmonised, by lectures and sermons and fine resounding phrases. On the contrary lectures and sermons may hide our real selves to us, till the time for action comes. Let us, therefore, embrace a life of action. We may commit mistakes. But mistakes are as valuable as correctness, failures as valuable as success in the evolution of character and in the research after truth. The sinner is nearer to the saint than the calculating prudent man of respectability. It is the struggle towards truth that counts. The prize is in the process. Let us then embrace the life of aspiration and struggle towards the light. The problems of life will then be harmonised, and we shall enjoy the only true happiness which it is

given to man to enjoy, the happiness of duty done in the face of discouragement and opposition. —K. N.

Wisdom Tabloids (12)

Of all the good fortunes of man, knowledge of God is the best and highest. To get Him is the last reward of goodness. Of all treasures, God is the richest treasure of man. He who has received this treasure does not count any other treasure as treasure. Of all the worlds, God is the highest. He is our supreme refuge. He who dwells in Him does not ask for the fleeting imperfect happiness of the transient limited world. Of all the joys available for man, to obtain God is the highest joy. In comparison with this supreme joy of obtaining God, the other joys of men are like mere drops in the ocean. Still, by enjoying these drops the creatures live.

Obedient to the will of the all-regulating God, fire gives heat; the sun shines, the clouds give rain, winds blow and death moves about. Nothing can go beyond His will and His rule.

The supreme object of human life is to acquire knowledge about the nature and purpose of God. The science, by the study of which, that supremely desirable pearl of knowledge can be attained is the true, the highest science; all other sciences are inferior.

Judge Not

How easy to preach and yet how difficult to practise! The average mortal finds it a congenial task to sit in judgment on a friend or neighbour. Rarely do we come across men and women who refrain from expressing their own opinions on the character and actions of their fellow-beings. Blame leaps up swiftly enough to our lips but the generous meed of praise where praise is due, lags invariably behind. Our eyes are jaundiced, our minds are prejudiced, our souls are miserly. The temptation to assume the judicial and critical air is great and the desire to earn the reputation of being wise or virtuous is too strong to be resisted. We are eager to find the mote in our brother's eye and consider not the beam that is in our own eye.

How often have we heard about the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man! In these days of platitudes it is proclaimed from the housetops and every school boy knows it. God is no longer a monster to be afraid of and appeased by sacrifices of goats and by the blood of buffaloes. He is a God of love, of infinite patience and all-embracing mercy. Centuries ago Jesus Christ preached that just as there is joy in the heart of the shepherd when he finds the lost lamb, just as the good housewife is glad when she finds her lost coin, similarly and in a greater measure is there rejoicing in heaven when a single erring sinner repents and begins to obey the command of the Heavenly Father. We are the children of such a father—ever ready to forgive, infinitely tender and loving. We form then a great brotherhood of life “bound together by the ties of companionship in frailty, joy, sorrow and experience.” In such a brotherhood where no man is perfect, but where every one of us has some failing or weakness, it behoves us all that we should not be hard upon one another. When the Almighty Father forgives and loves his erring children, who are we to turn up our noses and look down upon our brethren who have gone astray. Let us always remember that to misinterpret and despise is the easiest thing in the world, but to understand rightly is very difficult. And then again, with growing years and increasing experience, we find that our “compassions have been far more just than our censures and that our kindest interpretations of our fellowmen and their motives have been the truest.”

A touching story is told in the Bible. A woman accused of adultery was brought before Jesus Christ and he was asked what punishment should be inflicted on her for her crime. Jesus Christ looked down for a long time and then asked what punishment the Scriptures laid down for such a crime. “Stoning to death,” her accusers replied. Then the great teacher replied or rather wrote on the ground: “He that is without sin amongst you, let him cast the first stone.” Such was the power of this unexpected reply that all the accusers of the woman went away and left her weeping before Jesus Christ and when he looked up and found her alone, he said with infinite tenderness in his voice: “Woman, go thy way in peace and sin no more.” What a lesson for us to ponder over! It teaches us that the first duty of each and every man, who would be a willing

and ready judge of his friend and neighbour, is to think of his own failings, short-comings, weaknesses and sins. He will find ample materials for this inquiry into his own self. "He will have work enough to make himself tolerable to himself." Nothing in short will make us more charitable to the faults and frailties of others than a careful consideration of our own.

Again let us ask ourselves the question whether we can give a faithful portrait of our own selves. Self-analysis, as our experience teaches us, is by no means an easy task. How then is it possible for us to understand correctly our neighbour's character and the springs and motives of his actions? How then can we judge him? And how wicked and unjust must we be when we look with minds full of prejudice and unkindly feelings? Once we utter a judgment, we charge it with an injurious power which we cannot recall. We taint and poison the moral atmosphere and make it impossible for one of our fellow-beings to live and work there.

A man, who is struggling against temptations, a man who has sinned and is sinning, is not likely to grow strong and turn to the right path by our despising and shunning him. He is not likely to improve and become pure by our censure and harsh judgment. Moreover we, who constitute ourselves his judges, deprive ourselves of the glorious opportunity of reclaiming him to the path of righteousness and piety. With the symbol of holiness and badge of righteousness we are ready to throw up our hands at the slightest mention of delinquency. We look up to heavens with a satisfied air and say like the Pharisee of old "Lord I thank thee that I am not like unto these."

Let our attitude be one of humility, patience and love. Let us thank our Father for His great mercy towards us for keeping us free from many of the vile ways of the world. Let us love and sympathise with those who have not known what the protecting arm of love means. We know not what their temptations were, we know not the circumstances which must have made their lives so very hateful to themselves as well as to others; therefore whenever a fault or failing, however great or small it may be, comes to our notice, let us at least be charitably silent if we are not able to offer the prayer or shed the tear that would arise to the lips or eyes of a truly devout man.

—V. A. Sant.

Religion not undermined by Science

I do believe that in the Twentieth Century religion is destined to become more and more scientific and science more and more religious. I believe the day is not distant when a large number of those, who think, may rejoice in the harmony of Science and Faith by discerning the ultimate affinities between the concepts of Science and the Realities of Religion. The progress of science means the death of theological dogma but a vindication of religious experience. It is the belief of my growing years that science and religion will approach each other more and more in the years before us than they have done in the past, and both will contribute to the building up of a *new world-civilisation*. It is a sign of the times that the crude materialism of the last century is a spent force to-day. Fresh forces of Idealism are flowing in. Science, while being pressed more and more in the service of human progress and the practical life of man, is becoming more and more idealistic in its interpretation of the universe: practical in its results, modern science is destined to be idealistic in its world-view. Modern science has passed beyond the storm-and-stress-period of the last century: science to-day is beginning to touch the borderland of the Beyond; and some of its recent declarations are a witness to the reality of the Unseen.

Modern science is thus gradually shaking off its earlier scepticism. It is destined to strengthen with its testimony the philosophic argument that *being* cannot pass into *nothing* and the psychologic suggestion that the body is not the measure of consciousness, nor the conscious self our complete personality. It is destined to ratify the ethical impulse that illimitable waste cannot be consistent with the Moral Law and the religious intuition that God is good and will not leave us in the dust. It will check arrogant atheism by pointing out that we still may discern through the windows of sense some rays of the Glory that tells its story from the stars and carries through the quivering ether the message of Beauty and Wisdom and Power along the pathways of Nature. It will show that intellectual conceptions are a commentary on the intuitions of the religious seer. It will show that the historic procession of Humanity is towards Faith, at the altar of which wise men from East and wise men from West must bring their diverse gifts to glorify the One in all. The bright search-light of science and the ancient light of Faith shall together

shine along the path of Life. A union of intellect and intuition is the craving of the New Age : in that union is the hope of a brotherly civilisation and the assurance of a new constructive theology for which the heart of the West cries with a piteous cry to-day. Modern religion must become more and more scientific ; modern science must be accepted as a religious revelation ; and in the day this is recognised, the thrill and beauty of nature and man will be felt on a deeper level of life. We then may feel 'that we are greater than we know'; we then may feel that nature at its core is divine ; that science and faith are not rivals but that the twain together weave the spacious Purpose of God.

—T. L. V.

Wisdom Tabloids (13)

All-pervading and all-witnessing God is always present in the hearts of all. He has created this wonderful universe for the good of all creatures. Whatever good one gets, comes from that beneficent God. He is the giver of our knowledge, happiness and salvation. He is the dispenser of all good unto us. He is the source of all good.

* * * *

When all creatures are asleep that Perfect Person is awake making one desirable thing after another according to the needs of all. He is spoken of as the Holy, the Immortal and the Infinite. All worlds are established in Him. None can go beyond Him.

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In this earthly world, how many creatures there are and how manifold are the needs of each one of them ! He alone is fully providing for the needs of all these. He does not forget the needs of the smallest insect. Those who see the beneficent God, the Friend of all these, in the temple of their own hearts, the spring of their contentment is never dried up ; it is always new and fresh. They enjoy abiding peace.

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Grief overtakes us at every step, when forgetting God, we are immersed in the world with a view to enjoy the worldly pleasures.

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Dr. Herambachandra Maitra

I want to be free

Ram Mohan Roy was a great lover of freedom and once gave expression to this love of freedom by declaring "I want to be free or I do not want to be at all." What a glorious conception of human life his was. Life without freedom, however happy it may appear to be, is not worth living. The word freedom has a charm and grandeur of its own which none but free men can appreciate and understand. Lovers of freedom wish it not for themselves only but for all. Freedom of conscience, thought, word and action is what we long for. No man, however, can be said to be free unless he has got rid of the many masters in the form of greed, anger, jealousy and lust who take possession of his heart and rule him with a sway the like of which no human rulers, however tyrannical they may be, have the power and perseverance to exercise. —V. S. S.

Dr. Herambachandra Maitra

Herambachandra Maitra was born in 1858. He was the youngest son of Chandmohan Maitra, of the village of Keshabpur, in the district of Nadia. Chandmohan was a deeply religious man and was acknowledged by all who came in contact with him as a true man of God. Though coming of an orthodox Brahmin family, Chandmohan was gradually drawn towards the liberalism of the Brahmo Samaj movement, founded by Ram Mohan Roy. His active participation in the work of the Brahmo Samaj brought him into contact with the pioneers of the movement. In this way Herambachandra came directly under the influence of the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj, from his early boyhood.

After completing his education at the Government High School at Faridpur, in East Bengal, where his father worked as Sheristee of the District Magistrate's Court, Herambachandra joined the Presidency College of Calcutta. He took his M. A. degree in English from the College, standing first in the first class, in 1880. Sir Jagadishchandra Bose was among his school-mates at Faridpur and Mr. Bhupendranath Basu was a fellow student at the Presidency College. While yet a student, Herambachandra identified himself with the work of the Brahmo Samaj and gradually developed an ardent zeal for the cause of Brahmoism.

Soon after obtaining his M. A. degree, Herambachandra worked for a few months as Headmaster of a High School in Calcutta. He then joined the City College of Calcutta as Senior Professor of English in place of Mr. (later Sir) Surendranath Banerjea. The City School had been established sometime ago by some of the prominent leaders of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. It was subsequently raised to the status of a first grade College. His father would have liked him to join the High Court as a Vakil, but Herambachandra stuck to his choice of the teaching profession. He subsequently received the offer of a professorship in a Government College, which he declined, along with offers from other Colleges, at a higher salary. He thus showed his preference for his position at the City College with a comparatively modest salary.

Except for a break of a few years, when he was Principal of Jagannath College, Dacca, Herambachandra served the City College, first, as Senior Professor of English, and then as Principal, for fifty-four years, with consuming energy and the deepest devotion, till 1934, when he retired. He was also Lecturer in English in the Post Graduate Department of the Calcutta University, of which he was an elected fellow. For the best part of his life he was a Syndic of the University and one of its outstanding personalities. In 1920 he represented his *alma mater* at the session of the British Empire Universities Congress held in England, at which he delivered an impressive speech. The University of Calcutta conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Literature *honoris causa*.

His deep absorption in philosophy and literature could not prevent him from taking an active part in the politics of his country till the emergence of militant extremism in the body of the Congress after the non-co-operation days. His political creed was that of a Liberal; he belonged to the group of workers represented by Anandamohan Bose, Surendranath Banerjee, Bhupendranath Baus, Kalicharan Banerjea and Krishnakumar Mitra. He was closely associated with the work of the Indian Association from almost its earliest days, and was a striking figure at sessions of the Indian National Congress (before the non-co-operation days) at which his speeches on education were a notable feature. He took an active part in agitating against indentured labour in Assam and against the opium evil. He was unhesitating in his protests against Lord

Curzon's Partition of Bengal and his educational policy. He raised his voice of protest against Government's Punjab Policy in 1919, and was always fearless in his exposure of any reactionary policy or measure that Government adopted or contemplated in the sphere of education. He was enthusiastic in his advocacy of the Swadeshi movement. It is significant that in spite of being a "Moderate" in politics, he used to express himself so forcibly on occasions that even in the present more advanced times it is rarely that one comes across leaders speaking with such candour and courage.

Though his main work was that of a teacher of youth, Herambachandra's public activities were varied and many-sided. He was one of the founders of the well-known Bengali weekly, *Sanjibani*, which, at one time, did very valuable work in the cause of progress and reform, and of which Krishnakumar Mitra was the editor. Herambachandra also held the office of honorary editor of the *Indian Messenger*, the weekly organ of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, for about a quarter of a century. Even after he ceased to be its editor, he often contributed to its columns.

Herambachandra was amongst the foremost leaders of the Brahmo Samaj in his day. He was intimately associated with the activities which resulted in the establishment of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. He took a life-long interest in the work of the Samaj. He was a minister of the Samaj and was asked constantly to perform divine service. He undertook lecturing tours all over the country and also visited Europe and America, on behalf of the Samaj. He was President of the Samaj for several years and presided over a session of the Indian Theistic Conference. He was untiring in his efforts for the propagation of the principles of Brahmoism both by his pen and through the spoken word. His speeches and sermons were widely appreciated and produced a deep impression on the congregation.

Herambachandra visited Europe twice. He represented the Brahmo Samaj at the World Congress of Free Christianity and Religious Congress held at Berlin in August, 1910. At this he read an illuminating paper on "The Longing of Man for the Infinite." He undertook, on this occasion, an extensive tour in the United States of America and England. He was invited by various churches and other bodies to speak on religious and allied subjects

and his speeches were highly appreciated. He was invited by the Harvard University to lecture on Emerson, an author who shared Herambachandra's boundless admiration along with Wordsworth and Carlyle. It is easily understood that his spiritual bent should lead him to seek inspiration in the writings of these three apostles of faith in divine power. His second visit to Europe, as has already been stated, was in connection with the session of the British Empire Universities Congress in England in 1920. On this occasion also in response to various invitations he spoke at public meetings and conducted religious services at churches and elsewhere. Herambachandra's eventful career came to a close on the 16th January, 1938 at his residence in Calcutta.

Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, the distinguished Editor of the Modern Review and Prabashi, who was among his pupils, in noticing his death paid an eloquent and glowing tribute to Herambachandra's memory, from which the following excerpts are taken.

"More than half a century ago it was my good fortune and privilege to be one of those who sat at his feet. We not only derived from him intellectual illumination but also felt that his words and personality had a spiritually uplifting power. He taught both by precept and example. A man of noble and spotless character, guileless, sincere and earnest in all that he said and did, he could not but influence the character and conduct of those who came into close personal contact with him. His refined and noble presence was impressive. Stern he was on occasion, but how true and tender and affectionate! He was rigidly puritanic. Saintly he was. But no sour-faced, morose saint was he. He could laugh and make others laugh. He was delicately sensitive to beauty in man and nature. And he adored spiritual beauty. Meditation, communion and prayer gave him the sustenance which his soul needed."..."As a writer of English, he was noted for the beauty, poetic quality, accuracy and simplicity of what he wrote. His language would occasionally rise to the heights of sublimity and eloquence. His thought was profound and his observations true."..."He was an eloquent speaker in English. His speeches were remarkable for depth of thought and were garnished with quotations from his favourite authors."

Herambachandra claims greater attention as a servant of God, than as a political reformer, or an educationist, however singular his

achievements in the latter spheres. The reason is simple. For him, everything was secondary to quest of God. The hunger of the soul for its abiding place of rest obsessed him far more intensely than material needs or wordly problems. No trust was more sacred to him than that he considered to have been bestowed by the Supreme Being. Religion was a living thing to him. He applied himself to his humblest task with a devotion that always marks the action of those who sincerely strive to serve God through the conscientious discharge of their daily duties. All the integrity and purity of his character were brought to bear upon the most trifling questions, or rather what the ordinary person considers to be trifling questions. His simplest utterance had the accent of profound faith. We have already said that his father was a deeply religious man. His mother, Jagadamba Devi, was also an extremely pious lady of orthodox Hindu faith, and had a very charitable and kindly nature. Heramba-chandra's character derived much from her. Under the surface of an outward sternness and reserve, he had the tenderness and affection usually seen in children, as everyone who came to know him well testifies. There was another remarkable trait in his character; in spite of his unquenchable thirst for God and consequent restlessness of soul he was the very image of patience and calmness whenever fate aimed a blow at him. This rare combination of sublime dignity and humble faith used to be an example to others around him in the face of great sorrow.

—*Asok Kumar Maitra.*

The Divine Impulse

The age in which we live is an age of Mammon worship. It is a superficial age in which many false Gods are worshipped. Go wherever you like and you will come across men who think of nothing else but money. Visit all the commercial cities and you will find that their fair faces are bismirched with coal and soot. A few men make money and they care not that the many who work for them are starving. From morn till night people seem to be rushing. Their very holidays are marked by this ever present tumult and rush. Quietness and meditation seem to be at discount. The great problems which agitated the noblest minds of old seem to trouble no one at present. We live in a crowd and we live for ourselves and forget that the one true God who loves us all is very near us.

And yet when we think least of Him He reveals His loving presence to us, all of a sudden. Standing on the mountain top as we view the hoary tops of neighbouring mountains watching with silent adoration the glory and splendour of the setting sun we feel, perceptibly, as it were, the evening drawing her sable curtains over the world.

“The holy time is quiet as a nun
Breathless with adoration.”

Then we hear the speechless clouds proclaiming to the world the message of Divine mercy and love. The silent spectacle, the gleam, the shadow and the peace supreme bring home to us more vividly than many a sermon the pure and unalloyed love of Him who loves and guides all. Such sanctifying moments are rare no doubt but let us treasure them. For we have witnessed heaven's pomp and received a portion of a gift “from worlds not quickened by the sun.” Let us treasure such moments also because, not only have we felt the divine approach but our souls have leapt up and recognized the parental and universal spirit and then remembered the source from which it came. Let us treasure such holy moments far off in hours of weariness. When the burden of this world grows heavy, when the din and the noise of the chattering crowd or the cry or wail of pain and suffering prevents us from hearing the music of the spheres in honour of Him who rules all and supports all, then such moments bring sensations sweet, cheer us up and strengthen our faith. It is for these reasons that such sacred hours should be valued.

It is born within us as we gaze into the midnight vault of the heavens and watch the silent splendour of the glittering stars. It comes upon us when standing near the seashore we see the Lunar Queen playing upon the bosom of the sea. The gentle rhythm of the waves, the sweet music of the pebbles when the waters play in their midst and the broad expanse of the blue in front of us suggest thoughts of the Infinite. Our life seems to be a sort of resting place from the Infinite behind to the Infinite in front of us. With what different feelings and emotions our hearts are filled when the mild sea changes its aspect and assumes the Terrible! The rains pouring in torrents, the winds howling with mad fury, the sea in a tempestuous rage and the serpentine flashes of the forked lightning illuminating

momentarily, the dark masses of ominous black clouds! We are in the presence of Him who calms the sea and stills the winds and wields the lightning and we tremble.

It is at such moments that we feel the approach and presence of Him who rules and loves the universe. Let us treasure such moments and derive comfort and strength whenever He chooses to touch and teach our hearts through the external world.

But there are various other channels through which the Loving God reveals his watchful presence to us. All men have their sacred hours, their hours of divine discontent—their hours of spiritual struggle—their hours of noble longings and high aspirations. It is at such times that we look upwards and try to march onwards with the rod of faith in our hands. We grow impatient with the slow squalid surroundings and we seek higher and purer planes where we can breathe fresher atmosphere and bask under more unsullied light. Very often we are on the tip and brink of a moral precipice and a great internal strife between the lower and higher self within goes on. It leaves us weak and exhausted very often but if we have conquered our baser and lower nature our victory is not only for that occasion but for occasions to come. For trusting in Him who gave us the strength we must ever afterwards trust in Him remembering such moments as these. Again if we have done any evil or committed some wrong there comes a moment in our life when we feel the bitterest sorrow for the evil which cannot be undone and the wrong which cannot be righted. At such moments let us remember that the divine finger has touched our hearts and if we are careful we will treasure such moments and treat them as lamps that guide and illumine our paths.

—V. Y. K.

Time

Do we understand what that word means? Have we ever tried to realize its meaning in its full significance. One hour, we would say, unless it is marked by some cataclysmic event in our own life, is like another. The hour-hand goes its round. The clock gives us notice of the hour that is gone; and the hour-hand starts on its round again. Thus we might explain the mechanism by which we measure the flight of time. But that does not explain its spiritual

significance. What is *Time*? Let us hear what a great religious thinker says about it. "Time" says this thinker "is the solemn inheritance to which every man is born heir, who has a life-rent of this world—a little section cut out of eternity and given us to do our work in an eternity before, an eternity behind; and the small stream between, floating swiftly from the one into the vast bosom of the other." What do these words mean? Do they not tell us that every day that passes draws us nearer to that day "when unmistakable symptoms shall announce that the Messengers of death have come to take us." This is the spiritual significance of *Time*. The moment that is passing is ours. The moment that is to come is not ours. Because body's connection with what we call life is so mysterious that none can say when the one may not be separated from the other. We thus see that there is a solemn obligation laid upon us, if we hold ourselves accountable to our Maker, to so use this great gift of *Time* that we may have no occasion to regret its waste.

Saint Kabir's Wail

One day saint Kabir was passing through the bazar of Benares playing on his *vina*¹ and singing sweet *bhajans* of Hari. His mind was full of love and devotion towards Hari and he moved on, dancing with joy divine. All of a sudden he saw a woman grinding at a mill. As the flour dropped down the mill, she put in more grain which, being ground down in its turn, was followed by fresh seeds. At this sight the tender heart of Kabir was touched. He stopped at once and began to cry loudly. The men and women passing on the road began to laugh at Kabir and wondered what the cause of his strange conduct might be. They asked him why he cried and who molested him. But he would not reply. "These people," thought he "would not be able to alleviate my distress. What is the use of going for medicine to the diseased or for advice to the tipsy! These men whose thoughts have never travelled beyond things of this world, are too unspiritual to sympathise with me and soothe my grief." Thus no response came from him to the queries of the bystanders and he went on crying as before. By the time the saint, Nipatniranjan happened to pass that way. He went up at once to Kabir and asked him why he was crying. Kabir opened his eyes, looked at the saint

1 A musical instrument.

for a while and said to him hopefully, "Worthy saint, you see the woman there grinding at the mill. She drops seeds into it and they are turned into flour. That makes me think what the fate of a mortal like myself rolled on by the wheel of *samsar*¹ would be! This thought gives my heart and makes me cry. Oh! Nipat, who besides you would be able to console me?" Said Nipat: "Do not be anxious. Look at the mill. It is the grains, that fall away from the central rod, that are crushed. But those out of them, that have clung to the central rod, are protected by it and are safe. So it is with us all. Those of us, who are devoted to God and walk with Him, the central support of the whole universe, need have no fear of the grinding wheel of *samsar*." These words delighted Kabir who in gratitude embraced the holy man.

And Tukaram says that God is his companion wherever he goes and holding his hand, makes him walk; this has made life pleasant to him and blessed him with external and internal happiness. Moving with eyes constantly looking towards God and walking with the fixed purpose of doing the will of the Lord, will free us from the strifes and struggles between our higher and lower impulses by harmonising them in the service of our great destiny. It will not only remove the hardness of duty; but true Religion, which lies in clinging to the Highest, the Noblest, the ultimate Reality, will give sweetness to life and make it sacred. It is only by looking up beyond the actual by seeking God within and communing with Him, the All-holy that we will gain a sure and certain foothold in the troubled waters of earthly existence. 'Let us be at one with Him and our life will gather down upon it the strength of His infinite serenity.'

1 Wordly life.

Kinship of Humanity

Humanity is one. We can go further and say, "All life is one." It is an organism of which several races are members. It is a whole of which several nations are parts. Just as in an organism every member is correlated with the other members and lives its life in union with the life of the rest, so the social organism of human society has its life-pulse beating in harmony with the life-pulse of its constituent parts. When the harmony is broken, the social organism suffers, and its component parts share in the suffering.

Individuals form the nation ; nations form humanity. Enlightened self-interest perceives the good of the individuals in the good of the nations, and the good of the nations in the good of international communities, or humanity. Enlightened self-interest realises *right*, not *might* as the supreme moral law. In so far as the recognition of the supremacy of the idea of Right becomes universal, the world ceases to be an abode of misery and becomes a heaven on earth, a place where peace and happiness reign. The world is far, far away from this ideal. Were it not so, conflicts between nations would not arise. The air is thick with rumours of a repetition of the world war, from the ravages of which it has scarcely yet emerged. Heaven forbid such a disaster ! The duty of the pulpit is clear. It has to sound its clarion call of kinship and unity of humanity, to echo and re-echo its message of Love till it finds a home in the hearts of the peoples, ranging them against all that disturbs the harmony between individuals, nations and nations, between races and races, and between communities and communities. —T. C. K.

Social Work of the Prarthana Samaj

Religion is a way of life. It is a way of life for the individual and also for society. Religion shows to the individual how he can fulfil the true object of his existence, how he can develop the noblest and the best that there is in him, how in a word he can best realize himself, his personality, the spiritual part of him which is his true self. It is also a way of life for society. It teaches human beings what are the right relations that should exist among them, how men ought to feel towards their fellowmen, how they ought to behave as members of a body. Religion is not only a path for the individual spirit to travel, but it is also a way by which society must go if it is to bless and to be blessed. We frequently find in very highly spiritual communities a neglect of those outer forms, those visible institutions in which religion clothes itself as a social force. We have to remember that the social aspects of religion, its social meaning and its social potentialities are quite as important as its spiritual import. Indeed, the growing power of any religion depends upon the extent to which it is able to materialize its ideas, its ideals, its faith in outer forms of worship, in outer institutions for social

purposes, in churches and temples, and all those things that belong to the external aspects of religion.

What are the things that the religion of the Brahma Samaj or the Prarthana Samaj stands to do in the society in which we find ourselves? What is in other words the social message of the Prarthana Samaj? If our faith is to grow, if its power in the world is to increase, it can only be in the measure in which we are able to concretize in external forms the faith that is in us. It is the flower and the fruitage that makes men alive to the presence of the seed. It is not the seed that attracts men. It is the fruitage that first attracts them and leads them to the realisation of the seed. What are the things for which our faith of the Prarthana Samaj stands in the world at large? What are the great aims that we ought to see more concretized and materialized in our midst than has been the case at present? The brotherhood of man if it is going to be a force, a power, a guiding motive in society, has to be materialized. You may teach men that the great God who made us, loves us equally and yet you may be far from realizing a visible brotherhood.

Every religion, if it is to be a living, a growing and influencing religion, if it is to be an operative power has to be and to form a brotherhood. Take Christianity, take Islam, take Buddhism; what are these religions but great and effective brotherhoods? We, members of the Prarthana Samaj, if we want our faith to be a reality, if we want it to be a power and influence in the world, have first to create, to effect a visible brotherhood. Brotherhood means first of all a community united by very strong and very close bonds, a community which feels that the ties which unite it are very much more powerful than the causes which tend to separate it. We are in danger of overlooking this very simple but very important fact. We are in danger of thinking that if we, few individuals, are each one of us pure and noble and true in his own mind and spirit, it is enough. But it is not enough. Religion is a social force and it exerts that force first and foremost by welding together, a compact community. Next, think of the missionary enterprise of Christianity, of Islam, of Buddhism in their best days. These were not content to dwell together as communities with one central faith, one central hope, one central aspiration. They were driven forward to enterprises, the object of which was to

extend the faith that they held. We, too, ought to set forward missionary agencies. We ought to be consumed by the zeal to propagate the faith, by the zeal to win fellow-believers, fellow-members, from everywhere, from every part of the world, and above all from every part of our beloved country.

Then, we have to fight against all those forces of evil and hatred and oppression which tell against the realization, the consummation of brotherhood. A religious brotherhood is not a body of men who love isolation. A religious brotherhood ought to bravely stand against every thing that makes for tyranny, injustice, wrong and oppression. It should go forth and strike against these evils in the world. The Church, if it is ever to be a living Church, must be a militant Church. There are deeply rooted evils in our society. There is first the evil of caste by which communities, are divided from communities, group is divided from group, each shut in by barriers that cannot be passed over. If we believe in the brotherhood of man, how can we acquiesce in a constitution of society which essentially and unavoidably divides man from man? We want that all men should be placed in social relations which will make it possible for them to behave towards one another in the spirit of practical brotherhood. Every one, who has given any earnest thought to the subject, understands what an insuperable barrier it is to the realization of practical brotherhood.

Then there is the question of our duties towards our women. It requires some study, some knowledge of social conditions to understand the wrongs of Indian womanhood. No member of the Prarthana Samaj should allow himself to be ignorant of the true state of Indian womanhood. How can we, if we really believe in brotherhood, allow one-half of our race to remain in ignorance, to be deprived of those things which are the birthright of all human beings. Yet that is the position in which the vast majority of our sisters are to be found to-day. Oh, the isolation! the ignorance! the injustice! which our sisters are labouring under! If we believe in brotherhood, can we rest until woman comes by her own, until she gets those fundamental rights which belong to her in the name of all righteousness as the mother of the race, as the complement of humanity, as she whose hand because it rocks the cradle necessarily rules the

world. The sacred rights of woman, her claim not only to social equality, but to be acknowledged as the guiding genius of society, when is it going to be recognized? How can we rest till that time comes?

Lastly, but not the least, let us not forget the spirit of self-sacrifice, of self-spending. That is the essence of all religion. If we formed a united community, if we were consumed by the zeal to proclaim the gospel that we believe in, if we struggled by word and deed to right the wrongs of oppressed classes and oppressed races and the oppressed half of humanity, and yet if we had not the spirit of practical self-sacrifice, it would all be vain. While we should lay great stress on the things mentioned above, let us never forget that the essence of all these things is the life of service. Let us increasingly spend ourselves both as individuals and as a Church in all those ministrations of love, in all those services of tenderness, which are the life-breath of religious believers.

A writer places all the sufferings in the world under four classes: (1) ignorance; (2) crime; (3) poverty; (4) disease. All the evils of the world can, I think, be very fairly ranked under these four comprehensive categories. In the proportion in which we shall endeavour to alleviate the suffering in the world, in that proportion shall we establish the truth and power of our faith. The things mentioned above are the things that we should aim at. These are the things that our Samaj should endeavour to develop in order to make itself a social power. These are the things which are attracting our young men to the Samaj. May our efforts be blessed and may the social ministry of the Samaj be more and more deeply impressed on our mind and heart.

—N. G. W.

Natural Faith

The whole world obeys the laws of God. The sun and the other great suns dwarfed by enormous distance into stars, they all keep to their places as bidden by the Divine Will. The planets move in their orbits and the moons go round them. The elements have their laws though man has not yet discovered them all. The sprout rises from the seed and grows into a plant and takes its own time to

become a tree. Flies and insects live their days in this world of the Lord who provides for the smallest of his creatures. And the birds, those little gay things, and the beasts, they are all spontaneously led on by natural propensities best suited to their lives. Lastly, man, the crowning glory of creation, though erroneously thought to be without instincts, is to a large extent animated by impulses which can hardly be called voluntary. But he is more than that. From early childhood he sees, understands and expresses himself in words. He is conscious of his own self and of the world around him. He refuses to be carried on blindly and wonders what the things he sees are, and wants to know how the different phenomena in nature take place. His observation leads to the discovery of certain laws of nature. Man learns that every event is the result of certain preceding circumstances and the latter in turn are the effects of certain other antecedents. But he is no longer satisfied with the knowledge gained from experience. His thought constantly impels him to transgress the bounds of the sensuous world. 'Over and above the conditioned world of things he cannot help seeking for something that is unconditioned.' The reason, which betokens the transcendent greatness of human nature, provides man with the conception of the first cause of all causes. But that faculty, which, so far served him well in regulating his experience and in enabling him to systematise his entire thought of the world by bringing it under the point of view of organised unity, now leads him in the most serious difficulties. If we think of the first cause from which the whole concatenation of phenomena has proceeded the idea is too small for our thought. We begin to think how did that first cause come into existence at all. If God made the world, who made God? If on the other hand we try to imagine the chain of events as infinite and unlimited the idea becomes too great for our reason to comprehend. We get a notion that is quite hazy and inconceivable and there is no resting place for thought without some ultimate, self originating Ground of all Reality. And as no third alternative is possible, we at once realize the limited nature of our faculties and of the knowledge which we get through them.

But though reason thus fails us in the end, there is ever present in the human mind an innate belief in the existence of God as the self-contained source of reality. He has implanted in us a moral

certainty, a faith which takes us to Him like children to their mother. It is this humble and simple faith which has been the characteristic of all the great saints. As Tukaram says it does not allow any doubt to arise in the mind and gives abiding peace to the soul in the thought that the Divine Father is always present to uplift and bless us. Let us nourish and foster this natural faith, this love for the Father by finding Him in our hearts and relying absolutely on His light to guide us in the world.

What Man has made of Man

The poet was in a mood of despondency. Around him he beheld the budding tenderness of spring. The fair works of Nature, the primrose tufts, the wreaths of periwinkle, the hopping and playing birds and the budding twigs, all brought to his mind the beauty and happy order of Nature 'and much it grieved his heart to think what man has made of man.' With his thoughts fixed on the orderly growth and harmony visibly embodied in the natural scenery around him he "realized with the greater vividness the misery and disorder that man, by the treatment of his fellowman, has introduced into the world."

Certain wise men have made us familiar with the ideas of "struggle for existence" "survival of the fittest" and so on. According to them there has been going on among men a continual struggle. Individuals are constantly at war with one another to secure to themselves as many of the comforts and pleasures of life which their strength or their ingenuity can wrest from their adversaries. Selfishness is the one predominant motive that guides all their actions however carefully it may be hidden under the cloak of altruism. Do we not find competition and rivalry in every profession, business or trade? And what do these signify but the intense desire to appropriate to oneself the best and the largest share of the goods of the world. There may not be in these days the barbarity and the ferocity of the savage much in evidence. Men in general have found that lawlessness and violence are detrimental to the interests of the individual and the collection of individuals held together in the State. But all the same, the egoistic spirit is there and the cruelties to which it impels men are no less wicked though they may not be as

gross and flagrant. It is this spirit which underlies the struggle between class and class. The poor people naturally become jealous of the wealthy and the leisured classes. The contrast between their hard lot and the easy-going life of others drives them to rebel against the existing order of things and to combine in strikes in order to force the hands of their masters to part with some of their wealth. Thus the life of men in the world is but a story of the struggle between self-seeking desires and much of the misery to which they are subject is inflicted by them upon one another as a result of their rivalries and jealousies. Man in his cruelty has turned this earth into hell, full of miserable and despicable existence. What man has made of man! Surely an unhappy and wretched creature!

But does this train of thought express the whole truth? Nay, the undue pessimism which thus looks down upon humanity distorts the truth in a way which makes it worse than falsehood. Men may be selfish and their selfishness may have made their fellows miserable to some extent. But how much more does each one of us owe to his brethren? It would be impossible for any human being to exist if he be not helped and supported in one way or another by those around him. We are but parts of one another and constitute the essential elements of the social organism. The more complex the latter grows with the advance of times, the more indispensable do we become to one another. Where would the capitalist be but for the labourers who run his machines? And the labourers would have to end their days in starvation but for the enterprise and foresight of their masters. There may be an unjust distribution of the wealth produced by their co-operation but such as it is, it makes them possible to live together and strive for further amelioration of their circumstances. If that melancholy description of man and of his relations with his fellows had been true, he would never have emerged out of his native state of rude savagery. Men would have lived like cats and dogs if self-aggrandisement were the sole aim of their activities. A civilised state of society presupposes a philanthropic frame of mind, a spirit that unites the people by making them work for the common good. Joint labour and work for the promotion of some common object have rendered possible agriculture, industry and all the arts of an orderly and peaceful civil organisation. Thus it is man who makes the life of other men comfortable and happy and



Dr. J. T. Sunderland

provides them with the necessities and luxuries of life. But we are more than mere animals. We have inclinations, sentiments and aspirations that uplift us out of a life of mere eating and drinking. And these noble desires for the great and the good are brought out and fostered by the influence which the society and thought of other men exercise over our minds. The presence of those near and dear to us softens our hearts with their love and anxiety for our comfort and well-being and we cannot but respond with feelings of equal solicitude for them. Thus we love them and they love us and the whole world becomes an abode of happiness and joy. Further do we not derive all the amenities of life from the munificence of individuals or the state which is nothing more than an organisation of individuals? Our education, our culture, our enlightenment are all the results of the labour of other men. Other people have thought and written for us. We enjoy the fruits of the labour of poets, philosophers and authors whose books we read and whose ideas we assimilate. The contribution of these men to the elevation and exaltation of our minds is inestimably great. And even the further advance of his soul would be hardly possible but for the aid which man derives from other men. How many of us would have turned towards God and thought of the spiritual nature of our being but for the training that we received from others? Others have walked in the path of God, lived pious lives and inspired us to follow their example. Great and saintly persons have warned us of the danger of merging our minds totally in the material world, have tried to rouse us to the essential dignity and worth of our souls and earnestly requested us to draw into close contact with our Heavenly Father. Where would we have been but for their words of encouragement which deeply stimulate the heart! What man has made of man! He has made him human and helps him to become divine. —Y. V. B.

Dr. J. T. Sunderland

This well-known Unitarian Missionary who passed away on the 13th of August 1936, was a great friend of the Brahmo Samaj and India. His well-known book "India in Bondage—Her right to Freedom" which was widely circulated in Europe and America was proscribed by the Government of India. It was mainly through

his recommendation that the "Manchester Scholarship" was established for the training of Brahmo Missionaries.

He was internationally known as a religious leader and as a fearless supporter of India in its struggle for independence. He made two extended visits to India, sent there on special commissions by associations in England and America and to investigate religious and social conditions and to deliver lectures in the chief Indian cities.

He became well acquainted with Gandhi, Tagore, Lajpat Rai, the eminent author, former president of the Indian National Congress, and with other leaders in India. He was greatly admired for his work in India and leaders there declared his views to be "absolutely impartial and progressive and free from bias." Indian leaders coming to this country made it a point to visit Dr. Sunderland.

Dr. Sunderland was born in Yorkshire, England, Feb. 11, 1842, coming to this country with his parents at an early age. He was educated at the University of Chicago from which he received A. B. degree in 1867, and master's degree in 1869, and at the Baptist Union Theological Seminary in Chicago from which he received his B. D. degree in 1870. Tufts University in Massachusetts conferred a D. D. degree upon him in 1914.

He was pastor of the Unitarian church here for 20 years from 1878 to 1898, and was minister here during the time the present church was erected. His other Unitarian pastorates were as follows: North-field, Mass, 1872-1876, Chicago, 1876-1878, Oakland, Calif., 1898-1899; London, England, 1900-1901; Toronto, Ont., 1901-1907; Hartford, Conn., 1907-1911; Ottawa, Canada, 1912-1913; and Poughkeepsie, N. Y., 1911-1927.

Dr. Sunderland held many important positions in the Unitarian denomination, among others, those of director of the American Unitarian Association, president of the Michigan conference; secretary of the western conference; and superintendant of Unitarian church extension work in the west; and non-resident lecturer in the theological schools at Meadville Pa., and Canton N. Y.

He was the author of more than 20 books some of which have been translated into every foreign language. Early in his ministry he established and for 10 years edited *The Unitarian*, a monthly

magazine which obtained a large circulation in this country and England.

Dr. Sunderland's literary activities have been constant. For a time he was state examiner of colleges in Michigan. In Toronto, he was president of the second largest Browning Society in America. During all his ministry, he had been active in education, in temperance work, in work for peace, in woman's suffrage and in movements to improve the conditions of labour.

He wrote many pamphlets and tracts in addition to his books, and he was engaged in writing new volumes this summer. He visited Palestine and wrote three Sunday school manuals two published in this country and one in England.

Dr. Sunderland first went to India in 1895 on a special religious mission for the Unitarians of England. He lectured and preached extensively. In 1913-1914, he was sent by the American Unitarian association as its "Billings Lecturer" to India, China, Japan and the Philippines.

Along with this tour in the Orient, he represented "The International (American and European) council of Religious Liberals," and as their agent organized and made full plans for seven international liberal religious Congresses, which were abandoned because of the war.

While in India, he attended and spoke at two annual sessions of the All-India National Congress, and in 1913, served as president of the All-India Theistic Conference. He was one of the two or three Americans most widely known in India.

In Ann Arbor during his years as minister of the Unitarian church, he preached to the largest congregations of University students ever gathered in a Unitarian church in any University city. In Toronto, his Sunday night audiences were such as to give him the unique experience of being visited by the chief of police of the city and informed that unless measures were taken to prevent the overcrowding of his church evenings, of which so many complaints had been made, the law would be enforced upon him and his congregation.

Mrs. Gertrude Sunderland Safford wrote in a letter to the Editor of the *Modern Review* that just before his death Dr. Sunderland spoke:

"I believe the essential teachings of Jesus. The universal brotherhood of man is the highest religion of the world and will be forever."

His love for India is proved beyond doubt by a pamphlet issued during the Christmas of 1935 and sent to us with the following words.

"Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men."

On the New Constitution for India, he wrote in the above mentioned pamphlet:

"The framers of the Constitution represent it to the world as something very generous, honourable and noble on the part of Great Britain ; as a boon to India ; as giving her a large measure of freedom at once, and advancing her far on the road toward full freedom, that is self-rule."

India sees clearly now that Lloyd George's words were true, that the New Constitution is a "Steel Frame" to hold Britain's valuable possession more firmly than ever in her power, and everything seems to indicate, permanently in her power.

We call ourselves Christians. Is not Christmas a fitting time to call to mind these words of him for whom Christmas is named:

"He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captive, and liberty to them that are bound."

That he was one of the greatest champions of *Freedom, Justice and Peace* is proved by the following statement :

"As a young man Dr. Sunderland championed the cause of human freedom and fought for it in all parts of the world. He fought in the American Civil War, because he was an advocate of the emancipation of the Negro slaves. He espoused the cause of the oppressed Jews in Czarist Russia. He supported the cause of Egyptian, Arab and Indian freedom..."

Dr. Leo S. McColleston, Dean Emeritus of Tufts College, Boston, referred to the courageous character of Dr. Sunderland "who had always stood so fearlessly for what he thought right and true, the sweet charitableness and appreciative friendliness which characterized his relations with people, the gentle humour with which he softened the vicissitudes of life, and the forward-looking, progressive quality of his thinking which made him keep abreast of all the movements of thought and action in the world so that his writings to the end of his life were of current significance."

—*The Ann Arbor Daily News.*

Faith—the pivot of Life

"Our wills are ours, we know not how, Our wills are ours to make them Thine." In the conduct of life that should be the pivot of our faith. The proper governance of our souls, for that such a faith is indispensable. For want of it many lives are shipwrecked or lost in the wearisome and fruitless toil of ploughing the sands. Mathew Arnold in one of his great essays has said "there is so much power, so many able to run well, so many give promise of running well, but so few reach the goal, so few are chosen. Many are called but few are chosen."

Common Divine Power-House

The Vedas have taught us that the whole of the visible universe is the creation of one supreme, self-existing, pure and absolute intelligence, otherwise described as the Universal Mind, which pervades the whole universe, has always existed and will always endure; that the law and order visible in the wonderful starry heavens, that the most exquisite inexplicable, growth and design and power of reproduction, which run through the whole body of mammals, birds and reptiles, the measure of uniformity in organism which is to be noted among men and other animals and plants on earth and in the deep sea, that every creature which knows, feels, wills and has any life in it, that every blade of grass that grows, all offer eloquent proof of the existence of a supreme source of life even as the multitudinous

different colours and shapes of lighted bulbs, connote the existence of a common electrical power house. The calculations of mathematicians, the telescope and the microscope, the investigations of scientists in the departments of physics, chemistry, botany and zoology, have made it possible to bring this knowledge within the comprehension of every man and woman. This modern knowledge has supported the conclusions reached and proclaimed by the ancient sages of India, that there is only one God.

Golden Principles

This knowledge establishes an identity of relationship not only between man and man, but between man and all sentient beings. From this line follow two fundamental principles. As the same God dwells within all my fellow creatures, I must not do that unto others which I would not like others do unto me, and I ought to do that unto others which I would like others do unto me. These are the two negative and positive precepts proclaimed by the sages of India several thousand years ago as constituting the essence of religion and ethics. They have been long recognised in Christianity as laying down the golden rule of conduct for mankind.

If they are practised, they are sufficient to prevent the invasion of the rights of any one by another and to ensure the unmolested independent peaceful existence of the weakest as well as the strongest. If we can by a combined effort implant this truth in the hearts of our fellow-men, we shall have effected the greatest insurance against wars, ruinous armaments, unjust and unhealthy commercial competitions and all the evil consequences which flow from them. Here is a cause which seems to me to be worthy of engaging the attention of the best of our race. God grant that it may.

Nature and Man

Worship of Nature and of the great natural powers is the original form of all religion. It was from the impressions made on man by these powers of nature that his religion came. The sun, the moon, the dawn, the sky, the stars, all these phenomena, representing the grand operations of Nature evoked in him deep

sentiments of wonder and reverence. He apprehended in them something that was great and transcendent. Their grandeur and sublimity inspired him with awe and he bent in worship before them. Thus it was that the innate human capacity for religion was developed by the influence which the majestic powers, that carry on the processes of the creation, exercised on man.

It is this influence which has ever since continued to play an important part in impelling the human mind to turn to something higher, nobler than his own self. With his one-sided intellectual development man many have become an athiest. Or whatever his opinions as to the deity and his relations to it may have been, with the increase in his comforts and luxuries he may not have cared for religion or his spiritual growth. Or the materialistic culture and the spirit of the age may have been strong enough to choke up his instinctive tendency to penetrate through external appearances to the ultimate ground of all reality. But still whatever noble elements are left to him, depend for their rise and growth on his communion and intercourse with Nature. The mysterious universe is always calling and, in some form or other, we are always answering. The beauty and sublimity of the great phenomena in nature never cease to impress the most godless mind. The artist has flourished in every age, religious or irreligious. He responds to the power proceeding from Nature and operating on his mind by studying its æsthetic aspects and expressing them in his drawings and paintings. Another way in which the world appeals to the mind of man is to inspire him with wonder at the ever-changing phenomena and thus to lead him on to the investigation of their actual character and their causes. Here is the response of the man of science in the recognition of the laws of Nature and in the unfolding of its wonders. Though in pursuing these more or less, spontaneous activities man may be working quite unconscious of the presence of God in the Universe and quite unaware that these are but His ways of drawing his sympathies and aspirations towards Himself, he is nevertheless aiming at something higher than his actual self. He is conscious of the higher glories and splendour in the world which he has been powerless to understand and express. Whatever he has achieved, is quite insignificant as compared with what remains to be achieved. The discovery of the laws of nature and the investigation of its

phenomena accentuate the sense of the vastness of those that still remain unknown. Thus the feeling of a higher potentiality is always present to urge him on to higher regions of knowledge and beauty. And all these scientific and æsthetic pursuits meet with success in so far as they are carried on with unselfish motives. Nature is a hard task-master. It only favours those men who, in search of its beauty and knowledge, are devoted to it with the purpose of ennobling the souls and enlightening the minds of their fellowmen. The true artist paints his pictures to please the eyes of other men with the object of teaching them to appreciate the glories of natural phenomena. The man of science carries on his laborious work with indefatigable energy to the storehouse of human knowledge so that man's comforts and command over nature may increase. Thus these apparently secular activities dealing with nature are essentially religious. They involve self-denying labour for the common good in reaching higher things.

These are the characteristics which constitute the essential elements of a religious life and hence religion may be said to be implicit in those activities. But religion properly so called has not yet begun. The men of art and science though they are trying to reach a higher-than-self have not yet entered upon a conscious communion with him. It is only when the soul turns towards that from whence it came and where it is to proceed that true religion appears. Upon its advent the highly spiritualising influence of Nature over the mind of man is considerably increased. All the faculties and capacities of man undergo a splendid transformation. The intellectual craving, the desire to know the nature of the world we live in, reveals the essential relation of our own selves to the highest principle of it; the æsthetic need, the desire to do with objects that fill the imagination, breaks out in strains of deep reverence and adoration for the author of all that is beautiful and sublime. Thus nature which keeps the mind of man rivetted to high and noble objects even when religion is in the background becomes a very mighty and powerful force to uplift and ennoble the soul when she consciously turns towards God. The importance of Nature in the education of man and in the promotion of his spiritual growth is very great. It has always helped him onwards throughout his history, even when he was weak, feeble and undeveloped as well as when with the increase of his resources

he became proud and insolent. And its support is invaluable when man aspires to attain closer and closer communion with God, the Lord who created him as well as Nature. On its face he perceives the indescribable joy of his Creator; and it becomes a great help and guide to his devotions and meditations which lead him to the highest goal of his life, the realization of the presence of God.

Dangers of Nationalism

There are some in these days in our country who say that patriotism, nationalism or nationalistic politics not any prevailing religious faith—should be our religion. I admit the value and usefulness of nationalism at certain stages of the evolution of a people. But I cannot be blind to its harmfulness at other stages. Great crimes have been committed in various countries in the name of patriotism or nationalism. Tyrants, political leaders, demagogues, parties in power (including the Bolsheviks at present in power in Russia) are to be found among those who have professed to be impelled by patriotism or adherence to some political shibboleth while doing wicked things. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the latest cry. But would those who would be dictated to under such a regime feel their subjection the less, would the freedom of man be less violated, because the dictators, the despots, the violators were the proletariat? Neither patriotism, nor nationalism, nor communism, nor Bolshevism, nor any other 'ism' can be safely followed as a cult, unless it is instinct with highest ethical principles, which are of the very essence of religion. Love of one's own country is a highly laudable and valuable sentiment; but the elevation of the Motherland to the position of the Deity in pursuance of the cry, "My country—right or wrong," cannot be a substitute for the eternal verities of religion.

—R. N. C.

The Religious Spirit

A study of the history of religion discloses the numerous religious beliefs which mankind at one time or another held and which appear to the modern mind with its intellectual attainments and with the vast store of correct knowledge and information at its disposal,

to say the least, crude, fantastic, illusory and inadequate. Trees, rocks and stones, rivers and springs, and even the lower animals have been the objects of worship with men in all lands at some stage or other of their progress in civilisation. It was an illusion with them to think that the tree or the stone contained a spirit or that the spring was haunted by a nymph, who had to be propitiated in order to get some benefit or to ward off some evil. In his ignorance the early man turned to the great elements of nature as beings who could help him. He thought that the sun, the winds, the rain, the sea and other great phenomena of nature which we now know to be governed by inexorable laws, were animated beings who could be his allies and answer his appeals. Labouring under this deception he devised various ways of opening up communication with them in order to gain their favour. Further with their highly active imagination men have invented many mythical beings with legends as to their origin and their exploits testifying their superhuman powers and prostrated themselves before idols supposed to represent these fancied deities. The legends were believed as though they were statements of actual facts in history and those deities as the rulers of the world's destiny. Or, as with the Semitics, each clan was supposed to be under the special protection of its own god who was believed to have been the father or the ancestor of the clan. And the great religious systems of the world have invested all these beliefs with authority of positive ordinance or divine revelation and thus shackled humanity with fetters, the relaxation of which has demanded all the courage, strength and ingenuity of men to whom it was given to transcend the prevailing ignorance and superstition.

Thus it may be asserted that religion has arisen out of illusions. For long, long years men have believed in and revered things conjured up by ignorant fancy. And even now a large majority of men live under the tyrannical sway of various superstitious beliefs and practices. But, rightly viewed all these illusions were and are after all only the outward and inadequate expressions in which the inner spirit of religion has clothed itself. The external manifestation of this spirit must necessarily take place in terms of the knowledge which exists in the world at a particular time or which is possessed by the particular individual; and thus the expression of the innate feeling of the essential relation of the soul to a higher power or person

and of the instinctive impulse to worship and revere it or him, is hampered by the insufficient growth of the intellectual culture. If the knowledge is defective, religious belief must share in its defects. But surely religion is something more than knowledge. It is a life of faith, devotion and communion; and these are and can be deep and sincere, 'even when the knowledge which provides their forms of expression is greatly mistaken.' The prayers of the ignorant and the worship of the superstitious do often proceed from a very humble, child-like and devout heart which pandits and philosophers may attempt to possess in vain. This attitude and manner of the emotional and spiritual faculties determine the inner condition of the soul to a degree which suffers but little by the unavoidable lack of intellectual attainments. Here is the secret of the reverence which we of the present age with our superior knowledge spontaneously feel towards the sages and saints of by-gone times whose opinions and beliefs are often at variance with science and logic elaborated by the patient labour and investigations of succeeding generations. This recognition of the inner spirit of a man explains the respect and esteem which we feel when we watch those, whom we regard ignorant and superstitious, observing their religious practices with faith and piety. The inner consciousness sets before them an ideal, a thing not grasped by the senses. It is in pursuit of this vision, in the search to find outside what they feel within themselves and to assert its reality, that what we find to have been their mistakes, are committed. It is this earnest endeavour to realise, the ideal not the faulty outward expressions in which the sentiment is clothed, that constitutes the living and growing element of religion which has an eternal and permanent value of its own.

But true religion, when it finds that the forms of knowledge in which it has clothed itself are mistaken, has the power to leave them behind and to gain and profit by the new light that may have been acquired. The truly devout man will not tolerate a discrepancy between his knowledge and the beliefs handed down by old tradition. To adhere to what is plainly proved to be erroneous, and to pretend to find spiritual satisfaction in practices based on it is rank hypocrisy and dissimulation. How can any one be sincere in worshipping what he knows to be no god? No doubt men are loath to change the beliefs and observances for which some sort of affection is engendered

in them by long and ancient tradition. But the truly religious spirit protests against this tendency. It insists upon reflecting the enlightenment of the age. Its ideas about the object of its worship are enriched and exalted by the ever-growing thought and experience of the world. Its manner of communion with the deity must alter with time and prove itself in conformity with advanced thought. The religious spirit claims absolute freedom from external restraints imposed by old customs and contemporary social opinion. The only law that it will respect and obey is the law of reason and conscience; and it will readily devote itself to pursue the ideals which only that law discloses.

Thus the religious spirit has its history. Whenever it has found free scope to express itself it has reflected the highest thought of the various ages and nations. It has never shrunk from receiving new light and discarding old darkness. With primitive man his religion began in the rudest form and then gradually grew with the advance of civilisation. At every stage of its growth it has faithfully represented the desires and aspirations of the race. However inadequate and crude its earlier manifestation may appear to later generations, it has always been marked by sincerity of faith and earnestness of devotion. These characteristics made the religion a reality and the worship a true source of inspiration and exaltation. They made the inner spirit a living force which elevated the whole character of man notwithstanding his intellectual deficiency. They still do the same with the ignorant and the superstitious who have remained so for want of opportunity or capacity. And hence the religious experiences of every age and every nation and every individual become important and valuable aids to the religious culture and advancement for all times. Let us sift the grain from the chaff and treasure the same for our elevation and of those who come after us. Let it inspire us to promote the vigorous growth of the religious spirit in us and in those whom we can reach by bringing it in full harmony with our reason and conscience.

Wisdom Tabloids (14)

The supreme soul is the creator and the human soul is the created. The supreme soul is the ruler and the human soul is subject

unto Him. The supreme soul is the giver and the human soul is the enjoyer. The supreme soul is our one helper. By His favour we enjoy the happiness of the world, contentment of the soul and divine bliss.

* * * *

When the wise, righteous worshipper of God sees Him face to face with the eye of knowledge, then having attained Him, he is liberated from sins and does not do any action with the desire of enjoying the rewards of holiness. He does work dear unto Him for the good of humanity and love of God without attachment to the world.

* * * *

God is present always and everywhere. Those who try to know Him with a pure heart, attain Him.

* * * *

God, by whom the universe has been created and is regulated, is above all phenomenal existence. He is beneficent. He is constantly ruling the universe for the good of all. He is without a second; there is none superior or equal to Him.

* * * *

Son, wife, wealth and all else are transitory. Some day or other, we shall be separated from these dear things of this world, but we shall never be separated from the dearest, and nearest supreme spirit either in this world or in the next.

* * * *

Even as a mother watches over her child
Her only child, as long as life doth last,
So let us, for all creatures, great or small,
Develop such a boundless heart and mind.
Ay, let us practise love for all the world,
Upward and downward, yonder, thence
Uncramped, free from ill-will and enmity.

Regeneration of the Heart

The conviction that things are not what they ought to be, gives rise to a desire to improve them. It is this belief which is the source of all activities of reform. There is present in the mind of the promoters an ideal of a better state which supplies the impulse to work for uplifting the actual so that it may conform to the newly-disclosed standard of greatness and goodness. The whole history of civilisation is the history of the working of this impulse. Under its influence man has risen from a very rude state of life by degrees through successive stages to his present elevation and will continue in the same line of advancement in future. It is a divine law that the idea of the good should ever rise to a higher altitude. The more we realise the more we idealise and under the ever present inspiration of new ideals continue to progress and make better men of our own selves.

This impulse to do good manifests itself under various forms. Some people give themselves up to the work of supplying the physical wants and adding to the physical comforts of their fellow-men. That there may be more food and that all may get sufficient to eat, improvement in agriculture is considered an urgent necessity. The existing industries must be developed and new industries created so that all may find employment and earn a living. The sanitation of towns and villages must be improved to stamp out disease and prevent premature deaths; and cheap and airy dwellings be built up to enable men with small means to get sufficient room to live in. All the philanthropists who work on these lines are great souls who feel deeply for the miseries and sufferings of the poor and the helpless. Their attempts are directed towards providing the necessities without which it is hard to live. Hence their labours are highly beneficial and deserve the thanks of humanity and the blessings of Divinity. But does the provision of sufficient food and lodgings conduce to the lasting good and welfare of man? We have often been told that the increase in the consumption of liquor is due to the increase in the wages earned. The prosperity of agriculturists in one province in India is said to be wasted in vice, litigation and the purchase of worthless things. Thus the very things, which are intended to benefit, prove harmful and injurious in their results. And it is not difficult to find the cause of this strange phenomenon. Man has a

body. Without doubt it must be looked after and taken care of. But the body is but an instrument of the inner spirit. It is the soul which moves the body and employs it to purposes, good or evil, according to its own disposition. And as long as no attempt is made to save the soul or regenerate the heart the physical advantages are likely to lead to destruction and ruin.

There are others who work for the spread of knowledge and education. The training of the intellect, which is the fruit of these activities is undoubtedly a valuable acquisition. It enables men to become circumspect and prudent, and, if they choose to do so, to look on life from elevated and exalted points of view. But how can they choose such standpoints and follow their lead unless their souls are disposed that way? Do we not perceive men with high intellectual attainments going wrong and doing things of which the most ignorant person would be ashamed? In the same manner the improvement of political conditions or the social relations of men would be impossible unless the heart is sound and is inclined to think and do good. Otherwise the very external changes for which you work with so much zeal and vigour, will bring on miseries for which those for whom you are working will certainly curse you. The extensions of political liberties will supply opportunities to designing and artful men to secure power for their personal advantage. This is why the same political constitution produces dissimilar results in different countries; and the divergence can be traced entirely to the difference in the character of the various peoples. The same can be said of the attempted changes in social conditions. For do we not hear occasional whispers of the evil effects brought on by the abuse of the recently acquired social liberties from men who are by no means hostile to them?

It is not intended to disparage all these movements. They have a value of their own and are essential to the welfare of humanity. But this value and utility of theirs cannot be secured unless men are prepared to receive them in the proper spirit. Hence the change of spirit, the regeneration of the soul becomes the fundamental problem of all beneficent action. And the only person who tackles with it and tries to solve it is the man of religion who is grieved to find his fellow-men forgetting the dignity and worth of their souls and unning after things which are hardly conducive to their welfare.

It is he alone who labours to change the nature of the individual, to get at the heart and to save his soul. It is a mistake to call him unwordly or visionary. For he is really the most practical and the most far-seeing. He reaches the inner man and makes him capable of working for his own true and lasting good. And it is only to the extent that his efforts are successful, that all the other benevolent acts will answer their purpose and bring on real happiness.

Purity of Life

The human soul has the potential capacity for infinite expansion and evolution into the fulness of its attributes, and into perfection of itself. Hence the goal of humanity is to attain this perfection. As the Bible says: "Be ye perfect as your Father is perfect." It is the mission of man's life to endeavour to reach this goal. He must struggle to reach higher and higher stage of life in purity, and love and, at each stage, triumph over the baser elements that drag life downwards, and conquer selfish passions.

Having realised the Nature of God, *i.e.*, the Supreme Universal Soul and the nature of his own self, man should live the Divine life in the midst of this world. For this the Bhagvad-Gita teaches that man should live his life after the manner of the lotus tree. The lotus plant grows in ponds. Its roots spread widely in the mud and slime at the bottom of the pool, but its large leaves and its beautiful flowers keep above the water undefiled. In the same way man must live his life in the midst of the impurities of the world, but so live as not to be stained by them, keeping his heart always turned towards God, and receiving the inspiration of his conduct and life from Him. He must live a life of purity in the midst of the impurities and evils about him. This is a precept for a pure social life, not a life of isolation, or a life apart from society and the world.

—T. C. K.

Spiritual Religion

Religion is a *personal tie*. What does that signify? You look at a beautiful picture, you admire that picture but this admiration that you feel for that work of art has not established a personal

relation. It has set up a certain attitude of mind towards that object, but certainly there is no question here of any personal relationship. A geologist is found taking a little chip of stone and examining it under a microscope for hours. The man forgets himself. He is intensely interested in finding out the qualities of the stone, but again there is no question of a personal relationship between him and the stone. Religion is not an impersonal or intellectual relation of this kind. It is a personal relation. What then is a personal relation and with whom it is possible? Let me give one more illustration to show what it is not. You have a favourite cat or dog whom you very much care for, whose comforts are the object of your first care. If the animal were to die it would give intense grief to you, but there is no personal relation between you and the animal. Personal relationship is only possible with a kindred nature, with a nature that is essentially the same as ours. If religion is a personal relationship, the nature with whom that relationship is to exist must be essentially the same as ours. It must be a moral and spiritual nature. Therefore when we say that religion is a tie or a bond, what we mean is that the nature of the Being with whom this relationship is to subsist is a kindred nature to ours. Now we have to note that a nature may be essentially the same as ours in character, and yet may be infinitely higher in degree. Take a peasant and a philosopher. The philosopher has infinitely more knowledge than the peasant and yet the two are essentially of the same nature. The same laws of mind, the same rules apply to both. The essence of the intelligence is the same in both. Thus two natures may be essentially the same and yet one nature may be infinitely higher in degree than the other. Now the Divine nature is essentially the same as ours. If we are capable of affection, God is capable of affection. Good and evil have the deepest difference for us, they have the same for God also. Whatever the difference in degree—and the Divine nature is transcendently higher than ours in degree—the essential oneness must be there. We can feel no affection with the deity, if the nature of the deity was not essentially the same as our nature. We must be very clear about this principle. We must have no misgiving whatever as to the essential unity of the divine nature with ours.

There are other characteristics of this personal tie. The larger man's or a woman's mind and heart the more friendships does that

person need to make. The wider his personality the more friends he needs. Why? Because no one friend, however good he may be, will satisfy all the longings of his spirit. Our nature is so complex that no *one* friendship, no *one* contact, will satisfy the whole of our nature. With all that we find, that however many, our friends may be, still our nature longs for something more. That is where the need of religion comes in. It is a comprehensive relation which satisfies our entire personality. Again, think of the nearest relationships on Earth in another aspect. They are all changeable. The mother whom the child loves with such tender devotion will one day be taken away from the child. No amount of intensity of affection will save from the destructive hand of time these earthly relationships.

But the relationship of which we are thinking is beyond change. In one of the Upanishads it is said that the supreme reality is apprehended as the unchanging in the midst of the changing. In the midst of all the changes of life there is one reality that changes not. When a relationship is established with that Reality, there you get a tie that the hand of time cannot destroy. Lastly this relationship is a relationship of love. There are many valuable relationships, which are not however relationships of love, but this is a relationship of love. This brings all the satisfaction that love and love alone brings. There is no power on Earth greater than the power of love. When all our human loves are summed up and fulfilled in the great and divine love then we feel that life is fulfilled indeed. There is a love that changeth not, the love that abideth constant and that is the love of the eternal. Such then is the nature of spiritual religion. It must be felt as a personal tie. If it is merely intellectual, then it is not living religion. Religion to you must be a part, and the most important part of your every day life. Suppose you are a student of Science and spend many hours of your time in your laboratory; that does not establish any relationship between you and your object of study. Then come your relationships, your intercourse with your families, with those who are brought in practical contact with you in various ways; these relationships are really the life blood. When religion takes this place among the relationships of our life, then religion will no longer be a thing of ritual and observances. When the love of the Divine person becomes fixed in our hearts as to an

object that is felt to be kindred to our own nature though transcendently higher in degree, there and there only we have got true spiritual religion, that filial relation in which there is joy and peace and hope forever more. —N. G. W.

Prayer (9)

A sound theory of prayer is one of the essentials of a good and true religion. The poet has sung that

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed.

The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.

Sincerity is the first indispensable element of a true prayer. A prayer offered in private must be generally sincere, for the obvious reason that there is no ulterior motive in offering it. Public prayers are apt to be otherwise. Official and complimentary prayers may not proceed from a 'hidden fire that trembles in the breast.' Official and social duties do not always set the heart on fire. They may have the heart's approval and acquiescence and if a prayer be nothing more than an expression of those weak sentiments, it does not come up to the standard of a good hearty prayer, as set by the poet.

Prayer is the burthen of a sigh,
The falling of a tear ;
The upward glancing of an eye,
when none but God is near.

—V. S. S.

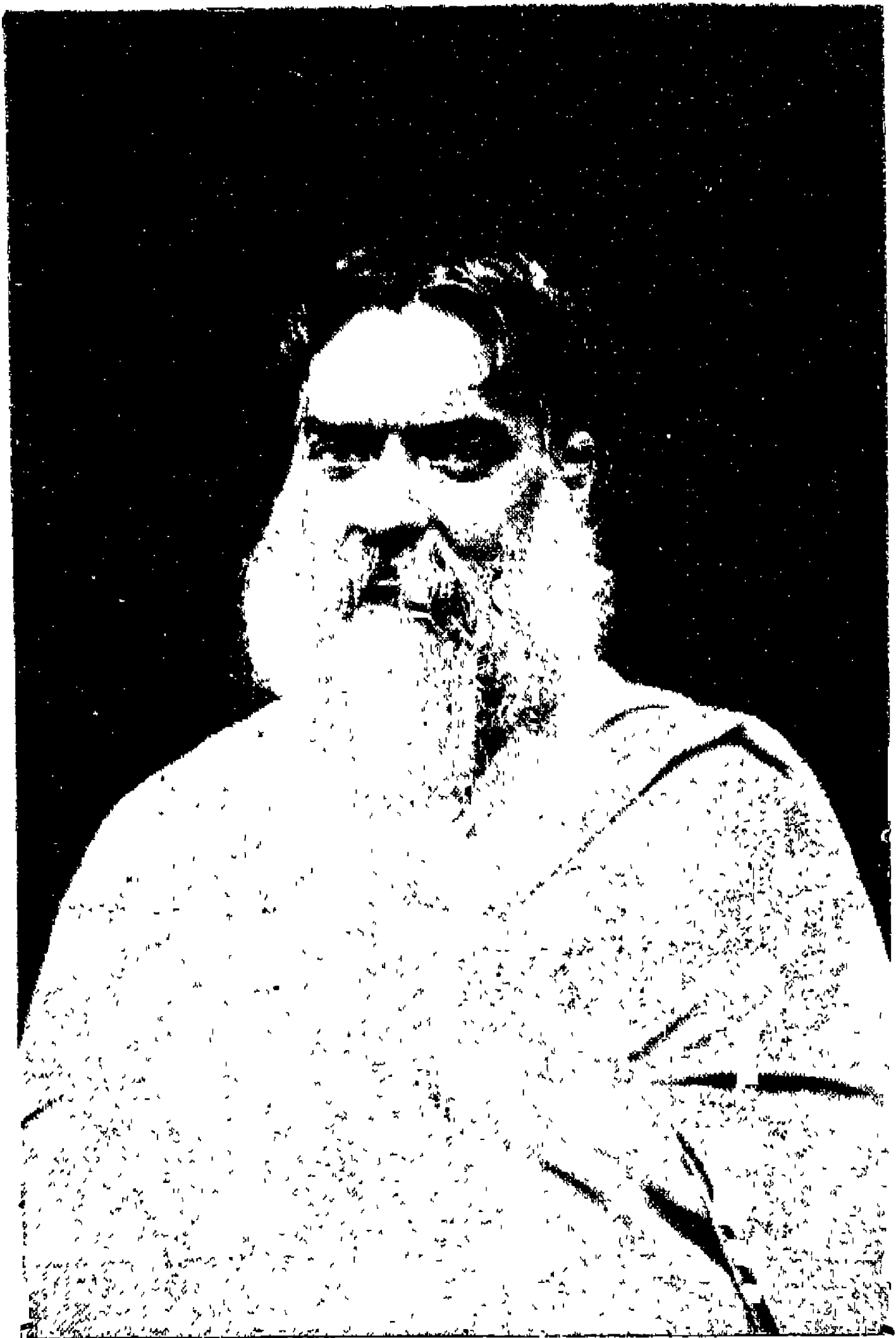
The Faith of a Reformer

With all the opposition and persecution the social impulse to raise humanity to a higher standard of morality and piety has always been manifesting itself. Great men, more or less able and willing to bear the heavy burden and to sacrifice their personal comfort and happiness for the good of others have always been coming forth to guide the destinies of the world. The motives which sway the wills

of ordinary men hardly influence them. Theirs is a life of trouble and labour, of giving than of gaining, of restlessness and work which allow no ease and comfort ; and still their enthusiasm and earnestness are the wonder of the world.

Now what is the secret of this life which seems to invite difficulties, misery and persecution ? What is the faith that dominates these benefactors of humanity ? Whence do they derive that strength of mind and character which enables them to bear the frowns and scowls of society with firmness and calm ? The source of all these lies in their ingrained conviction that their message is based on truth, righteousness and love. They have made them the sole motive, aim and end of their life ; and the power and force derived from those noble principles are tremendous and brook no resistance. They rely on the very source of all strength, the Almighty who is Himself truth and love. The power of the Father enables the worthy and faithful son to disregard the pinpricks of his lot and gloriously sustains him in his mission. And this is the way in which Providence has been working in the evolution and progress of mankind. He has sent forth men who have been willing to be his instruments to give up all and follow Him. They have been ready to efface themselves completely and surrendering themselves to the Divine Will, have made their thoughts, and actions the expressions of the All-pervading Truth and Love that governs the world. They lose themselves to find themselves. They have given up their petty selves which loved ease and comfort to assert their higher selves which delight in the company of the Great Self and in obedience to His will ; and what appeared to be burdens before this reconciliation and harmony are found to be but the privileges of the new life of the spirit which dawns thereafter. And it is by means of such powerful instruments that the Almighty has led on the world and made it better than what it was and the future history of all nations will be a record of the same process.

Such are the burdens and privileges of the reformer. Let those who wish to adopt that role realise them, for their responsibilities are heavy. If, by lacking the requisite faith and strength, they go wrong they make more difficult the path of those that are truer than themselves to the inner light. The triumphant opposition becomes more powerful by its success and calls for much more vigorous and



Krishna Kumar Mitra

sustained efforts to overcome it. If they are weak, let them first acquire strength by associating with that Source of all Strength who is ready to confide it to all who earnestly seek it from Him to bring His kingdom on earth. While engaged in their labours of love let them always keep their eye on the inner condition of their will and be careful to find that it is ready to place complete reliance on God on all occasions.

Inner Response

Speaking of personality, the fact that one human being may hold converse with another, may derive comfort, solace, strength and counsel from him, may unburden himself to him, does not obviate the necessity of a Supreme Person with whom we may all hold converse. There may be difference of opinion regarding prayer for definite gifts or boons or help, but of the value and need of prayer as communion and of unburdening one's soul for some response, there can be no question so far as *āstikas* are concerned. There are things which cannot be communicated to any human being, perplexities whose tangled skein no human hand can unravel, trials in which no human help can be sought or obtained. On such occasions, unburdening oneself to the Refuge of all who are heavy-laden, has been found to be a relief, response has been believed to be obtained, healing and strength and calm have been available. A great poet and *sādhaka*, on being asked, reassured the questioner that such response was a reality, not an illusion. Personality, with consciousness, thought, will, and the sense of oughtness implied therein, cannot spring from anything less than, anything inferior to, Personality. It is as possible for a machine-like soulless universe to create man endowed with mind and spirit, as it would be for a clock to create the clock-maker. If the Power in nature and in us and beyond us and nature be not personal in the human sense, it must be Super-personal, not infra-personal or sub-personal.

—R. N. C.

Krishna Kumar Mitra

The Brahmo Samaj movement which was at the time gaining ground amongst the educated classes of Bengal attracted young Krishna Kumar who embraced it in 1874 and since then distinguished himself amongst the contemporary leaders of this great

religious movement. He was one of those who founded the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj and identified himself, heart and soul, with all its allied reform movements. He was also one of the founders of the City College and the Brahmo Balika Sikshalaya, and began his own life as an educationist. He was appointed Professor of History in the City College and as such was very popular commanding respect of both the students and the staff. He was also the Superintendent of the City School but under the pressure of the Government he had to give up his direct connection with the above two educational institutions.

In 1882 he took to journalism and joined the *Bangabashi*, the premier newspaper of Bengal at that time. But he had to sever his connection with it and start his own paper, *Sanjivani* in 1883, through the columns of which he carried on all sorts of reform movements. His writings in connection with the oppression of the tea-garden coolies and the anti-drink movement created great sensation at that time. It is not known to many, that during the anti-partition days, it was he who took first the vow of Swadeshism and wrote an inspiring article on the 20th July, 1905 in this connection. In 1906 when the historic session of the Bengal Provincial Conference was sought to be forcibly dispersed and the utterance of the famous anthem *Bandemataram* was banned, by the local authorities Krishna Kumar was the only son of Bengal who sternly refused to submit to the deliberate inroads into public right in the name of Law and Order.

A man of fervid patriotism, sterling qualities of heart, and high moral character, S. J. Mitra was a very prominent figure during the stormy days of the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal. He plunged himself into the vortex of the Movement and worked assiduously in the service of the country. Krishna Kumar was one of those who were deported from Bengal in 1908 under regulation III of 1818.

For fifty-four years, he edited the *Sanjivani* with conspicuous ability and in recent years, so far as political matters were concerned, it was made the mouth-piece of the Liberal Party.

His life was much identified with the Brahmo Samaj movement. He was, for many years, the President and one of the founders of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, and a life-long minister of the

Calcutta Congregation. He was closely associated with numerous humanitarian and social institutions all over the province and these used to receive the benefit of his advice and guidance in an abundant measure. His activities in connection with the Burdwan flood in 1913 are well-known. He always stood as a fearless champion and fought for the cause of the oppressed women of Bengal, as much as against all social oppressions and injustice. He organised a Women's Protection League sometime in 1910 and to the last day of his life his facile pen was forcefully engaged in inspiring his countrymen with a true spirit of manliness to see that the oppressors, of whatever social status, were brought under the clutches of the law and deterently punished. The moral consciousness of the country just awakened about social vices and evils, against which he waged a life-long crusade, owes much to the effect of writings and preachings of this great reformer. A universally respected man, his death will be regarded as a great loss especially to the cause of oppressed womanhood of Bengal of whom he was really the guardian angel.

—I. M.

Sj. Krishna Kumar Mitra was in a very real sense the Nestor of Indian politics. He was a great religious and social reformer, an educationist, a politician, an author and a journalist. As a champion of oppressed womanhood and an upholder of the rights of the depressed and backward classes, his services have been unique.

The new generation does not know Krishna Kumar of the anti-partition days. It does not know Krishna Kumar, the stormy petrel of the anti-partition agitation. Along with Surendranath his name will go down to posterity as one whose contribution to the annulment of the partition of Bengal was the greatest. With him passes away the last of the giants who had made Bengal politically the most forward province in all India.

Krishna Kumar began his life as an educationist though he had given up his job as a teacher to give all his time and attention to the anti-partition agitation. But he continued to take a lively interest in matters educational and *attached great importance to the building of character on the foundation of true education*. Himself a man of spotless character who had maintained all his life the highest standard of integrity nothing pained him more than the lapse of any person from rectitude and morality. His life was an

inspiring example to all who came in touch with him and his presence was awe-inspiring to all because *he practised what he preached*.

He was a leader of the Brahmo Samaj and was long its Acharya and no man has filled that sacred office with greater worthiness. Every head bent before him as he passed and every heart was charmed by his utterances, the deep sincerity of which could not be questioned for one moment. To the eradication of many social evils and abuses he had applied his wonderful energy. Yet loving by nature he sought to eradicate those evils more by sympathy and by persuasion than by stern action.

His journalistic activities were marked by the same sincerity and earnestness that could be discerned in all his other activities. He never played to the gallery and *disdained to earn money by pandering to the taste of the multitude or making compromise with his principles*. He lived all his life a poor man and has died with little of the material riches of life. He idolised his principles and sincerely believed that every man had a high mission.

In thorough keeping with his high ideals of journalism he disdained to be glorified or lionized by the populace and even by his numerous friends and admirers. None has lived a more dedicated life, dedicated to the service of his country and his fellow-men but he had the unique distinction of being free from what Shakespeare has said, "the last infirmity of a noble mind," the desire for fame. It is given to no man to be perfect but *if any man has ever lived up to the ideal of perfection in body, mind and spirit it was this remarkable man* who has passed away leaving a void that would not be easily filled.

—A. B. P.

The Battle of Life

The one object with which God has called every human being into existence in this world appears to be that he should labour. Without labour in some form or other there is no life. At times labour takes the form of a battle and men who desire to make the most of their life rejoice in the fact that they have to carry on an incessant warfare with enemies within and without in order to attain

their goal. Tukaram in one of his *abhangs* describes his life as a continuous warfare with the world outside and the mind within. If men had not had to struggle for self-improvement, they would become slothful, and sloth, we know, is only the father of ignorance and decay. Labour then, is a blessing which we ought to learn to appreciate. Take the case of a man who works in his field all day and compare the same with that of another who despises labour and contents himself with sitting idle and doing nothing. Who is more contented of the two? Who is it, that is more cheerful, more healthy, more spirited of them? Certainly the former and not he whose life is characterised by idleness and lethargy. In the battle of this life, we must struggle and persevere in doing it till success crowns our efforts. Life is a battle and in living that life we have to work our way up from the lowest grade to the highest. No work, therefore, that we may have to do should be regarded as useless or below our dignity by us. To obey our Commander should be a matter of cheerfulness with us. Those who have struggled in the battle of life, know that the hardest part of the fight is with the enemies within. How often has Tukaram narrated his experiences of the fights he fought with his own inner self. The enemies without take to their heels before a resolute warrior, but those within are the most stubborn and difficult to conquer. Do we desire success, do we want to achieve the glory of our existence here, let us ceaselessly continue the fight, let us labour in the most uncomplaining manner. There will be falls and failures but they will be the glorious forerunners of success if we only determine to make them so. Let us remember the cheering advice of Parker who tells us to seek at the commencement of the battle of life the strength which religion brings. "In such a mighty work as this of life, such a complication of forces within, of circumstances without, such imperfect guidance as the world can furnish in this work, I should expect to miss the way sometimes, and with painful feet and heart stung by self-reproach, or grief, or shame, retread the way shame-faced and sad. The field that is ploughed all over by Remorse, driving his team that breathe fire, yields not a faint harvest to the great reaper's hand. Trust in God will do two things. It will keep you from many an error; nobody knows how great a gain this is, till he has tried. Then it will help you after you have wandered from the way. Fallen you

will not despair, but rise the wiser and stronger for the fall. Do you look for strength to your brave young hearts, and streams of life to issue thence? Here you shall find it, and with freshened life pass on your way.

The Divinity of Human Soul

The whole created world is *one family*, i.e., humanity is a brotherhood, of which God is the universal Father and Mother. Therefore, it is the privilege and duty of man to see himself reflected in his brother-man, and to see his brother-man reflected in himself, i.e., to recognise the complete identity or kinship of the soul of his brother-man with his own soul, and his co-partnership with him in the gift of the Divine nature, and thus man should look upon his fellowmen with the eye of love and friendship.

Having realised the divinity of all souls, and thereby their essential unity, one soul or self cannot do violence to another soul or self, and when this attitude is evolved, there is continued peace. Then there is no room for hatred. Then every one feels that he has his allotted task to do in fellowship with his brother-man, and enjoy in his sphere the sweet, God-given gift of a free life of love and peace.

Guru Nanak exhorts us to realize the divine nature, be at one with God, and live divine life on earth. When human life is attuned to God's life, when it is assimilated to God's life, there is no forgetfulness of God. He says that a life without God-consciousness is fruitless, is a waste, just like a tree that yields no fruit, or a cow that gives no milk, or a well that has no springs of water. Therefore let there be abiding consciousness of God during human life on earth.

—T. C. K.

True Progress

True civilisation, true progress lies not in the increased facilities of communication nor production, nor in the extension of pleasures and luxuries of life. With the diffusion of scientific knowledge and of technical arts as well as the enormous rise in the traffic of the world, all these things have become accessible to most of the nations of the world. And yet we find that there is a great disparity in the

advance made by them in that evolutionary progress which all mankind is ultimately destined to reach. And this difference can be ascribed only to the ideas which dominate the mind of the people of the particular country in their relations with one another. It is these ideas that determine the greatness or backwardness of the various nations. Those people who are more honest and just, solicitous of the interest of their neighbours as well as their own, considerate, self-restrained and loving, it is they that can be called truly civilised. The essence of man lies in his spiritual side and in the degree in which his mind and soul have been elevated, he can be said to have made a real advance. Hence the true evolution of man lies in the progress of his mind and the thoughts of which it is the seat.

And hence it behoves those who are left behind in the race to fix their eye mainly on this inner side of true progress. All the increase in true happiness and pleasure will follow as a matter of course if the character of the people is distinguished by its nobility and integrity. But it has been natural with most people to be dazzled by the outward form in which the inner greatness manifests itself. They in their ignorance, forgetting the underlying principle, spend all their energies in introducing that form in their own country. The political institutions, the social customs and the industrial and commercial organisations are all sought to be transferred without making sure of the foundation on which they are to stand. Hence there is every likelihood of all their labours being wasted if it be not for other people who are engaged on the other less attractive though more solid work of training the mind and forming character.

It is thus evident that the change of spirit, the regeneration of the soul is the fundamental problem in the progress of every country. And the only person who boldly and directly tackles with it and tries to solve it is the man of religion who is grieved to find his fellow-men forgetting the dignity and worth of their souls and running after things which without the self-restraint of an awakened soul may prove to be disastrous. It is he alone who labours to change the nature of the individual and to get his heart. He is really the most practical and the most far-seeing. He reaches the inner man and makes him capable of working for his own true and lasting good, both in this world and the next. And it is only to the extent that his

efforts are successful that all the external forms of a higher civilization will answer their purpose and conduce to the true happiness and welfare of the people.

A Beautiful Incident

A naval officer being out at sea in a dreadful storm, his lady was sitting in the cabin near him filled with alarm for the safety of the vessel, and was so surprised at his composure and serenity that she cried out: "My dear husband, are you not afraid? How is it possible you can be so calm in such a dreadful storm?"

He rose from his chair, dashed it to the deck, drew his sword and pointing it to the breast of his wife, exclaimed:—

"Are you afraid" (of this sword)?

She instantly answered:

"No."

"Why?" said the officer.

"Because," replied the lady, "I know this sword is in the hands of my husband, and he loves me too well to hurt me."

"Then" said he, "Remember, I know in whom I believe, and that He who controls the winds and holds the waters in the hollow of His hands, is my Father."
—*Indian Mirror.*

God, Universe and Man

So, frail man finds his God in the shining of the stars and in the great deep that spreads from pole to pole. Nay, not only in the sky and in the sea; but also in the rushing torrent, in the rippling stream, in the murmuring brook, in the snow-clad mountain heights, in the silent shady valleys, in the pathless wilds, in the forests "that teem with foliage, fruits and flowers" and "in the flowering of His fields." Almighty, Almighty must be the Creator of all these!

Yes, I find Him in the shining of the stars; I find Him in the flowering of His fields. But—but in His ways with *men*—I find Him not—I find Him not!! So exclaim the doubting sons of men,

at least in some of their sad, very sad moments. God moves in a mysterious way. The poor ignorant man, the man of small faith whose spiritual vision is as yet bedimmed, finds it hard to reconcile the idea of a just God with the fact that in this world "vice should triumph; virtue, vice obey." Especially in this commercial age of keenest competition and race for wealth and fame, the good and honest man often exclaims in despair that he cannot understand why the dishonest and unscrupulous man should prosper more and more while he with many scruples of conscience sinks into greater and greater poverty. Buoyant youths with great thoughts and high ideals starting careers in life with honest intentions, and pious determinations are constrained to stand aghast at the suggestion of the hoary man of the world that in order to succeed we must behave like the rest of the world; for there is no use trying to be too honest or over scrupulous—there is no use trying to be *Sadhus* and all that! What a shock to the tender conscience of the cultured youth with high aspirations and noble ideals! Is there a God? Is this Providence's sway. "Why is all around us here as if some lesser God had made the world and had not force to shape it as he would?" Thus our minds are clouded with a doubt.

Again, the righteous man who passes his days with God, whose business is to pray, whose pleasure is to praise—the man whose life "is to vice unknown"—to such a man God seems to be harsh; on such a man Providence seems to lay His hands. Loss of the world's small possessions, death of the near and dear ones, sorrow after sorrow, misfortunes and calamities not single spies, but in battalions—too many, too heavy, too great for human hearts to bear—these seem to be the lot of the virtuous man, who well might exclaim in despair "There is no God."

No God? "Perchance we see not to the close." To the real child of God who can say with faith, submissiveness and resignation, "Father, thy will be done", and who does not presume to pierce the veil or scan His ways, "this world is wholly fair" although "these eyes of men are dense and dim and have not power to see it as it is."

It must not be forgotten that, after all, the hands of faith we lift unto heaven are *lame* hands. In spite of all our spirituality and meditations there will be and there are bound to be many things too deep for human ken—many things—many problems—"behind the

veil." It is only the patience born of an unshakable faith that will enable us to confess that the Almighty is after all just, doubt and fear however much we may, and that He is the Father of mercies. We have to believe when we cannot prove, and trust when we cannot unriddle.

Be ye Children of Light

"In the mass of the detailed performance of duties prescribed for the individual by the ancient Rishis one idea stands out most prominently, namely, that he was to pray, to seek and to yearn for 'Light.' The *Gayatri* is no more and no less than the cry of the human soul for Light. It is an appeal to God that his Light might be shed on the mind of the individual to illuminate it. We are taught there not to pray for bread but for 'Heaven's Light, our Guide,.' It teaches us to bask in the great morning which rises forever out of the eastern seas and be ourselves children of Light. It is not the *Gayatri* alone which points to this ideal yearning. The Upanishads too emphasise it, for there we are taught to pray every day for the light of truth. The ceremony by which the boy is invested with sacred thread and initiated into the responsibilities of a serious life is performed before Fire, the emblem of Light, to teach the boy that his principal duty is to be a child of Light. The marriage ceremony, too, is performed in the same presence; but more, the man and woman, wedded as husband and wife, are enjoined to preserve the sacred fire in whose presence the marital bond was tied and to worship it. Family life was thus considered as the centre of the social system; the home was made 'a shrine or a sanctuary, not a mere lodging-house but a haven of rest and strength,' where God dwelt *because Light shone*. —N. G. C.

Individual Responsibility

If you thus free yourselves from the blind worship of the past, your individual responsibilities lie in the following directions:—

- 1st, you must cease to be indifferent and begin to think,
- 2nd, you must come to some *decision* and form your own opinions and take care *not to appear to be an opponent* of social reform.

3rd, you must live and act up to your opinions and principles.

First, it is your duty to think and not be indifferent to the burning social questions of the day. I would emphasize the need of a more thoughtful and a more serious temper of mind than I seem to notice among the students and educated young men of the Deccan. "We want, each of us, a living conscience for our social sins," and that alone is the stepping stone to social reform. The capacity of any society to advance, depends upon the vitality of the individuals who compose that society. "Every reform was once a private opinion and an institution is the lengthened shadow of one man! Each of us has therefore to realise that he counts and ought to count for a force of social progress and well-being."

Secondly, by bringing honest thought to bear upon the present state of our society, you will be convinced of the need of reforms and changes in some directions. Well, then, what are you going to do? You cannot excuse yourself on the ground that you are an obscure person. Serious responsibility rests on the shoulders of every educated individual be he great or small, famous or unknown. Your home and your immediate circle of friends and relations are the humble spheres where you have first to reveal your character and convictions. You may not be aggressive reformers, you may not volunteer your opinions; but certainly, from the moral point of view, it is a serious matter if you, being really convinced of the need of reforms, allow the orthodox people to count you as one of their number. This is your second responsibility then viz. that you do not endeavour to appear to be as one who is orthodox or as anti-reformer, when really you are not that.

Having thus thought, as educated men ought to think, over the several social reform problems and having each of you individually come to some decision, your next responsibility is to act and be what your convictions lead you to be. The educated man who can live and act up to his convictions is the man that India badly needs. As I have already said it is a fatal mistake to think that, since we are insignificant, it does not matter whether we are social reformers or not. I tell you, social reform in India to-day, must essentially be undertaken by humble people like you and me *at home*. Begin reform each one of you, in your own homes. Do not talk of others

and of the failures and failings of others. Think of yourself only. You are convinced of the need of certain reforms. Are you acting according to your convictions and trying conscientiously to further those reforms? As an educated individual with some settled views you are expected, if indeed you are a patriot and care for the progress of your country, to do your level best to promote social reform in your own sphere. You are in duty bound to protest against the social evils whenever opportunities occur. People will be attracted to the cause you espouse by your pure influence, your passionate attachment to that cause and your sincere action. —A. K. M.

Pain, Our True Wealth

Man's freedom is never in being saved troubles, but it is the freedom to take trouble for his own good, to make the trouble an element in his joy. He who has realised this knows that it is pain which is our true wealth as imperfect beings, and has made us great and worthy to take our seat with the perfect. He knows that we are not beggars; that it is hard coin which must be paid for everything valuable in life, for our power, our wisdom, our love; that in pain is symbolised the infinite possibility of perfection, the eternal unfolding of joy; and the man who loses all pleasure in accepting pain sinks down and down to the lowest depth of penury and degradation.

It is only when we invoke the aid of pain for our self-gratification that she becomes evil and takes her vengeance for the insult done to her by hurling us into misery. For she is the vestal virgin consecrated to the service of the immortal perfection, and when she takes her true place before the altar of the infinite, she casts off her dark veil and bares her face to the beholder as a revelation of supreme joy.

—R. N. T.

Sadhu Hiranand

(1) Mirabeau in his funeral oration on the death of Benjamin Franklin had remarked that nations had no business to pay homage to the memory of any, except those who were the benefactors or heroes of humanity. Sadhu Hiranand was a true benefactor and



Sadhu Hiranand

hero of humanity. Hiranand was no brilliant scholar or a literary savant. He never made any noise in the world. He never aspired to the acquisition of wealth or to make his name. He scarcely earned enough to make his own living.

He had dedicated himself to the worship of the one true God and to the service of his fellow creatures. He always ministered to the material and moral wants of his countrymen. Sadhu Hiranand's stronghold was his great character. By his religiousness and morality he gathered round himself a host of devoted disciples who, inspired by his large humanitarianism, did works of great beneficence. The Hiranand Leper Asylum was one of those works. The first few years of his life, he spent in journalism. And it may be said that it was for the first time under him that vernacular journalism was conducted by private agency. Before that, it was an organ of the state.

Then he applied himself to the study of medicine, because he thought that by relieving pain and suffering, he would be rendering the most practical service to humanity. He started 'Union Academy' which now goes after his and his noble brother Navalrai's name, the chief object of which institution is to build the character of the future generation. He served on the Women's Hospital and may be said to be the pioneer of medical relief for women at Hyderabad (Sind). He also worked a good deal for the promotion of female education by looking after the girls' school.

He lived a most simple life. He was most gentle in his manners and extremely unostentatious. His constant care was "Purity of thought, word and deed." His motto was, "Have as few wants of the body and as many wants of the spirit as possible." The noblest work of his life was the heroic service he rendered during the Cholera of 1892. He tended the patients without distinction of riches or religion.

—H. V.

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(2) Hiranand was not a scientist, nor a philosopher; he was not a politician, his life was not romantic, not a life full of events and incidents such as may strike the imagination of men. His is the charm of character, not the charm of external circumstances, his is the beauty of the soul, his is the glory of a godly life.

Hiranand's simplicity was the first great lesson of his life. While a member of the 'Eagle's Nest'—a Brotherhood organised at Calcutta—Hiranand used to sleep on the floor with only a mat as his bedding, as he used to do after his return to Sind. He never dressed gaudily. His love of simplicity prompted him to patronise *Swadeshi* articles. He never thought of externals. Hiranand was simple, because he lived in a world of reality. He realised the seriousness and sanctity of life. But Hiranand was not *conscious* of his simplicity; to his simplicity he added humility. Humility was the second great lesson of his life; let us put away all thought of self and hold ourselves the organs, the vehicle of God's holy influence.

The third lesson of his life was the spirit of service. His simplicity and modesty did not degenerate into inaction. He tried to serve Sind to the best of his abilities. He started the Academy, because he had faith in the power and the divinity of the student community. He understood that students were the trustees of the society and that no reform was possible unless the student community was elevated. He also started "Bands of Hope" and led the campaign of Temperance though he was insulted sometimes. And he started girls' schools, because he understood that the regeneration of the country was not possible, until woman was raised.

What was the secret of his life? It was communion with God. As a young man, he wrote in his private journal. "Father, may I aspire to be Thy faithful child!" This was the real secret of his life. This aspiration to embrace the Eternal, this longing to communicate with God sustained him in life. The fourteenth of July (Hiranand died on 14th July 1893) must not be a day of lamentation and mourning, but a day of communion and consecration. He opened a new epoch in the history of Sind.

Hiranand is not dead but liveth still. For as Shri Krishna says in the *Geeta* "The Soul dieth not." —T. L. V.

The Brahmo Principle of Independence

The idea of Liberty in religion is sometimes that of an ideal state, never perfectly realized, sometimes a practical principle which must be applied to the actual conditions of religious life. As an

ideal, freedom means that inner state in which the bondage of habit, of past sins, of natural infirmities is broken, and the spirit feels itself free and strong and at peace. The most grievous fetters are those which are inward and unseen, while the inner freedom of the spirit is that which most deserves the name. The conception of freedom in this sense when fully developed merges into those of Redemption, Salvation, and (if the word be ethically understood) of *Mukti*. But in the New Testament this notion of inward freedom is always, or almost always, found in conjunction with the idea of freedom or liberty in its primary sense of being free to act and to think according to one's own conscience and reason. Liberty—liberty in the ordinary sense of the word—is necessary to spiritual freedom. Inner freedom involves the power of thinking, speaking and acting according to one's own conscience in the face of the hostility of one's own family, one's own *jatbhais*, (caste-men) one's own church or community. A man must be known by his convictions. If he is not prepared to stand by them he will soon lose the capacity for having convictions at all. To whom, and under what circumstances, he should profess his beliefs is a further question but somehow or other he must be known by and must identify himself with his convictions. He *is* his convictions; he *is* his principles. The significance of that man's existence in the world is to be found in his convictions and in his power to rule himself thereby. His convictions are his soul. His soul, the ground of his existence as a potential organ of the Spirit, is the fact that he can entertain convictions and be moved to action by corresponding emotions. To be true to one's sincere, unbiased convictions is to be true to God. A man cannot expect to grow in his power of realizing God unless he is absolutely true to whatever light God has given him.

This is inward freedom; the opposite state is that of slavery.

They are slaves who will not choose

Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,

Rather than in silence shrink

From the truth they needs must think.

They are slaves who dare not be,

In the right with two or three.

Perfect freedom of heart, has seldom been realized. But Raja Ram Mohun Roy, and the Brahmo community, which inherited much of his sincerity and earnestness, have a special claim to honour in this respect. What simple truthfulness and sincerity of mind there was in that inquiry into the authority of the Vedas undertaken by the early Brahmo Samaj ! It was no attack instigated by hostility to religion ; it was religion itself that impelled the Maharshi and his friends. On the other hand it was no mere grudging surrender to criticism when adherence to a traditional position had become bad policy. It was spontaneously undertaken for the sake of God's truth, and the result was no mere bit of special pleading, no foregone conclusion dressed up as a result of *bona fide* inquiry. And now it is a Brahmo religious poet who has written the well-known prayer containing the lines :—

Where the mind is without fear....
Where knowledge is free...
Where words come out from the depth of truth...
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father,
let my country awake.

Brahmos have a right to preach the doctrine of Liberty for they have lived up to it themselves. In fact, for present purposes we can take the word Brahmoism to mean the principle that in one's beliefs, words, teaching and practices one should live by the guidance of one's own reason and religious feeling, discarding all idolatry and superstition at whatever cost, frankly teaching others what we ourselves hold to be true.

—Rev. R. Gordon Milburn.

Purpose of Life

Man dies. When we say this, we mean the body dies. The body, bereft of the spirit, returns to its elements. Death does not end all. The spirit lives, survives the body. We say it is immortal. What do we mean by immortality ? Has the spirit an endless life in a static condition ? No. The life of man has a goal. The seeds of divinity are there in him. They are latent, potential. Man is divine by nature. There is an urge in him to be holy,

righteous and good. If, in obedience to this urge, man disciplines his life, he grows in his divine nature. His progress is from stage to stage till he reaches his destiny, which is the perfection of the Divine nature in him. Man's span of life, on this earth, is short, too short for the achievement of this destiny. A continuance of life after death will fulfil the purpose of life in the plan of God. Hence there is justification in saying that the dead live. They live in spheres that the human mind has not been able to discover, but they live to grow and become. Man is immortal also in another sense. His spirit, that is, the collective unity of goodness in his life, his love, his tenderness, his pity and compassion, his righteousness, his nobility all—live in the lives of those whom he has left behind, and contribute to the moral progress of the world. The world would be an arid desert if it were not so, instead of a flowering garden. Hence, it becomes the duty of the survivors to take up the thread of his divine life, and draw it further than its destination. That way alone is the way of eternal life in God and the fulfilment of the purpose of life.

Human Brotherhood

If inter-racial brotherhood is important, no less is international. No nation prospers by seclusion. It used to be thought differently; and there was some ground for the thought when the countries of the world were unrelated fragments. But now since they have become united into one world, the situation is wholly different. Now isolation is weakness, it is poverty, it is absence from participation in the world's life and the world's prosperity; and as for fighting others, that is suicide. From this time on, that nation will be the most prosperous, the most influential and the most safe which has the fewest antagonisms, and the closest and most friendly relations of every kind with the other nations of the world.

To brotherhood between races and nations must be added brotherhood between classes and individuals. Society in its real interests is a solidarity, and is coming to be more and more so as it grows more complex. This we need all to understand. No man can injure another without injuring himself, no man can benefit another without benefiting himself. Each needs all. Social divisions based upon distinctions that are artificial are evil. Men should be

estimated for themselves, not for their ancestors. It is nobler to have ascended from low ancestors than to have descended from high. Men should be measured by what they are, not by what they have. A great and good man is as much to be honored before he obtains wealth, or after he loses it, as while it is in his possession. Jesus has said that the highest are they that serve. He that lives for self alone is a despicable character. We are all "our brothers' keeper." Every man's wealth, as also every man's talent, is a trust, he did not create it if he uses it for self only he is a robber. It belongs to God and humanity quite as much as to him: it is lent to him to be used for the good of the human brotherhood. Social brotherhood in our day appears in many interesting and excellent forms in almost all sections of society. The chief trouble is its limitations. We have social sets, restricted to a chosen circle, social clubs for the few. We have social and benevolent fraternities of many names some of them with very large memberships all of them excellent so far as they go. But the great need is for brotherhood unrestricted, as wide as humanity.

Brotherhood both social and industrial is God's law, and he who does anything to violate it, does so not only at the peril of society, but at his own real peril as well. I come now to brotherhood between Religions. It would seem natural to suppose that religious brotherhood would arise earliest and easiest of all. But as a fact it has been one of the last to make its appearance. Even yet the world knows only a little about it.

Religion began in the world low down. Early people generally believed in many gods. They attributed to their gods their own characteristics and passions. If two nations or peoples were hostile toward each other, their gods were regarded as hostile. Under such conditions there could be no brotherhood between religions.

And even after men had largely come to believe in one God, there were many obstacles to be overcome. Men have always been prone to believe that they were special favourites of God, that God had given a true religion to *them* but not to any other people! that He had given inspiration to *their* prophets and religious teachers but not to the prophets and religious teachers of any other land; that *their* sacred books were true and divine revelations, but that the sacred books of all other peoples were false; that *their* way of salvation

was the true and only true one, and that nations or peoples who trusted to any other would be lost.

This kind of thinking has always prevented religious brotherhood and always must prevent it so long as it continues. Happily, little by little the larger view is dawning on men's minds, not only that God is one, but that he does not have favourites; that all men are his children: that his providence embraces all lands and peoples; that his inspiration is not confined to any age or race, but is universal; that his revelation is larger than any single book or set of books, it embraces all truth; that he has raised up prophets and saints and teachers of righteousness in all lands. As soon as men begin to think in this large way then religious brotherhood begins to appear, and grow, and bear its beautiful fruit of love and peace among men.

We see then, what kinds of religion the world most needs. It needs those that lay emphasis on the things that unite. Religions that fight and antagonize others, by that very fact condemn themselves. We want religions of good will,—religions that propagate themselves not by the sword, not by controversy, not by traducing other faiths, but by the beauty and self-evidencing quality of their truth, by the elevation and purity of their ethics, by the breadth and kindliness of their spirit, and by the excellence of their good works.

Probably the thought that has done most to produce religious brotherhood has been the teaching that God is the universal Father, and that all men are his children. As that high faith spreads and takes possession of men's hearts, religious wars and persecutions will become impossible, religious hatreds, bigotries and antagonisms will cease, and men will learn to walk together hand in hand as brothers.

The world needs nothing else so much as it needs brotherhood! Not of one kind only but of all kinds racial brotherhood, national brotherhood, social brotherhood, industrial brotherhood, religious brotherhood, brotherhood between all classes—the spirit of brotherhood to pervade all life!

The finest dream that ever rises on the prophetic vision of humanity is the dream of human brotherhood. Human brotherhood

means the "commonwealth of man." Human brotherhood means the "kingdom of Heaven" coming to practical realization on the earth.

—J. T. S.

Holiness

One of the transformations we seek from our religious life, from our communion with God, is holiness. We pray that we should be pure and we should be holy. It is worth while meditating on what we mean by holiness. Let us remember that we pray for purity and holiness, thereby implying that holiness is something higher than purity. To be pure is to be clean within and without, pure in body, in mind and heart,—free from taint of any kind. That gives us the idea of washing off our sins, as we wash away the dirt of our body. Holiness is not the equivalent of purity, though there cannot be holiness without purity. "Holy of Holies"—that is the phrase we use of God, that is how we describe God. The holy one is a perfect one. Holiness has the association of sanctity, sacredness, of something blessed, and peaceful and resigned. All the attributes that we associate with a righteous life are implicit in the attribute of holiness. You do not call a man, who is false and untrue, holy. Holiness goes with humility and reverence. It is love and meekness combined. It is power combined with calmness. It is righteousness without the self-righteousness of a Pharisee. It is not pride, though it includes self-reverence. Holiness, in short, is the wholeness of spiritual life.

There cannot be spiritual self-realisation without holiness. A holy man is a serious-minded man but not a gloomy man. Cheerfulness, a sunny temper, forgiveness and forbearance are its accompaniments. The saint like Tukaram or Christ is an embodiment thereof. There is nothing either strained, artificial or ascetic about him. For, spontaneity is its very core. Holiness is thus the wholeness or completeness of character. It is that crowning and completing religious element which makes life whole at the higher end of it. And yet true holiness is not renunciation of the world. It has as its foundation strong, full manliness or womanliness. Holiness is the crown of religion on manhood and womanhood. That is why Coleridge said that a mother was the holiest thing alive. And

a perfect picture of it, we find in a description by Mrs. Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Says she in a passage that is as striking as it is true, "with a noiseless step, an almost shadowy movement, my mother's hand and eye were everywhere. Her house was a miracle of neatness and order, her children under her perfect control, and the accumulations of labour which beset a great family where there are no servants, all melted away under her hands as if by enchantment. She had a divine magic too to commune daily with the supernatural. She had a little room, all her own, where, on a stand, always stood open the family Bible, and when work pressed hard and children were untoward, when sickness threatened and the skeins of life were all crossing and tangled, she went quietly to that room, and kneeling over her prayer-book, took hold of a warm, healing invisible hand that made the crooked straight and the rough places plain."

Peace and happy trust, the glow of sweetened and ennobled life, purity, humility, fortitude and faith—these make life holy. It is a high endeavour, which touches and unfolds the deepest in us. It is a compound of high thought, ennobled feeling and kindly, dutiful action, full of charity and love towards all, and with face ever turned to God, with the trust that whatever He sends is ever for the best. True goodness, true greatness and true saintliness—all reach this point of holiness, and pass on "from glory unto glory and from strength unto strength."

—V N. N.

Importance of Ministry

We all firmly believe that we have a Gospel of supreme value, which it is our bounden duty to preach and propagate among our countrymen. It is our firm conviction in respect of which we all are absolutely agreed that we have great, saving truths to preach, truths about God, Man, the world and life, by the acceptance of which the life of manhood and womanhood will be immensely ennobled, purified and blessed. We all are convinced that this Faith by which we set more store than by any other possession in the world is one through which lies the surest way to national regeneration and without which any social or political fabric, however imposing in appearance, will be like a building erected on a

foundation of sand. Numerous signs around us are making this every day more clear. A hundred things that are taking place before our eyes show without doubt that *true religion* is India's most pressing need in this crisis of her destiny. Why is our political life so crabbed, so unlovely, so little productive of social good? Because pure religion and undefiled is so little in evidence there. Our economic life tells the same sad tale. When men without high religious principle control a people's economic life, that life goes to corruption and ruin fast as canker kills the flower's bloom. So pressing, so imperative is the need for religion; and we feel and believe that the Religion of the Brahmo Samaj is the truest, noblest, most significant yet known. But who will preach the Good News without a preacher? You will say, "Cannot laymen preach; why do you want ministers in particular?" Consider the position of our laymen. How few they are and how overburdened with secular work! The Theistic movement in India has not yet reached the aristocracy of the land nor has it yet spread to the masses. It draws its membership from the intellectual classes of whom necessarily only a small proportion is responsive to our call. This being the case, the laymen in the Brahmo Samajes everywhere are a very small body in numbers and have heavy professional or official duties to perform in addition to many family and social obligations, leaving them extremely scant leisure for religious work. —N. G. W.

Dr. Sir R. Venkata Ratnam Naidu

Born at Masulipatam on *Maharnavami* in September, 1862, this pre-eminent son of Andhra passed away at Cocanada on the twenty-sixth of May, 1939. His father being a *Subedar* in the military, his early education to the end of the Matriculation course was received at the regimental stations of Banda (U. P.) and Hyderabad (Dn.). After graduating from the Madras Christian College, he was occupied for a year with journalistic work on *The People's Friend*, the *Brahmaprakasica* and *The Fellow-Worker*—the last two the organs of the Southern India Brahma Samaj—at the metropolis of the Presidency. Then followed three years (1886-88) of service in the Theistic High School, Rajahmundry, in the Church Mission Society's High School, Ellore, and in the Hindu High



Dr. Sir R. Venkata Ratnam

School, Masulipatam. The M. A. Degree in English Literature and an Assistant Professorship in Pachaiappa's College, Madras, preceded a second return to the old native place for five years (1894-98) as Professor in Noble College (under the C. M. S.). Six years (1899-1904) in the Headship of Mahboob College, Secunderabad, and, next, fourteen years (1905-19) in the Principalship of Pittapur Rajah's College, Cocanada, brought to a close the service-roll of this born teacher and leading educationist prior to the First Elected Vice-Chancellorship of Madras University (1926-28).

The formative influences that wrought upon his singularly exalted life had their beginnings in the interest first awakened in the Mono-theistic system of belief and worship by Islamic studies with Urdu as the optional language in Upper India. This was deepened by a knowledge of Rajah Rammohan Roy's indigenous movement casually picked up while learning about the administration of Lord William Bentinck and the abolition of *Sati*. Among the later personal forces chiefly contributory to the making of the erudite scholar, the sedate thinker, the eloquent speaker, the enraptured devotee and the benevolent philanthropist were: the ever-inspiring figure of "Pradhanacharya" Rev. Dr. William Miller (the presiding genius of the Madras *Alma Mater*), the encouraging lead given betimes by Mannava Butchayya Pantulu (in the re-organised upbuilding of the Madras Brahma Samaj), the stirring mission visits of Pandit Sivanath Sastri (the "soul's parent" from whom 'initiation' into *Brahma-dharma* was received while in the collegiate career), and the hand-in-hand co-operation maintained throughout with "Nayaka" Pandit Veeresalingam Pantulu in all spheres of progressive reform. Added to these was a thorough at-home-ness in the varied realms of English letters, Sufi lore, Brahmie literature and the modern philosophy of Theism ranging from James Martineau to Otto Pfliegerer and further down to all the latter-day Gifford Lecturers.

Membership in the Municipal Councils of Masulipatam and Cocanada and in the District Board of Godavari; Vice-Presidentship of the Cocanada Taluk Board; Presidentship at several District Conferences, Political, Social and Theistic, in the Circars, and also at the Gadavari Anti-Non-Co-operation and Adi-Andhra Conferences; and, wider afield, Presidentship at the Ranipet Provincial Social Conference, at the Madras Provincial Anti-Untouchability

Conference and at the Calcutta All-India Theistic Conference, besides Deputy Presidentship of the Re-organised Legislative Council of Madras—these comprised some of the numerous channels of extra-mural public usefulness on different occasions. In the Educational sphere, in particular, like beneficent activities were put forth as Chairman of the Kistna Primary Examination Board, as Member of the Provincial S.S.L.C Board, as President of the Northern Circars Students' Conferences at Vijayanagaram and Masulipatam and of the South Indian Teachers' Conference at Madras, as Member of the Educational and University Re-organisation Committees under Government and the Legislature, as Witness before the Royal Commission on Educational Service, as Deliverer of the Madras University Convocation Address, and as Chairman of the All-India Inter-University Board.

Naturally simple and unassuming to a degree in all his ways, this model of primrose modesty was content, through life, to spend himself in silent service with no more ambition than to impress the genuine image of the God-like upon a few chosen spirits within his range. This circumstance was primarily responsible for his rare gifts and graces of head and heart hardly coming to be adequately known and felt in the whole country at large. Yet, in his own self-restricted pale, honours rained thick and fast upon the consistent votary of obscurity alike from Governmental and Academical quarters and from that spiritual Confraternity of which he was the venerated patriarch in Andhradesa. After 'Rao Bahadur', 'Dewan Bahadur' and the 'Kaiser-I-Hind Gold Medal', he was the first educationist marked out for "Knighthood" in the Presidency. Next came the hoary distinction of 'Kulapati' at the hands of the South Indian Teachers' Union and the Honorary Degrees of D. Litt. and LL. D., respectively, from the Andhra and Madras Universities with a Life-Membership in the Senate of the latter and a Portrait unveiled in its Hall by His Excellency the Chancellor. Lastly, in profound appreciation of a living witness to God-communion, the spetuatesimal landmark in 'the saint's pilgrimage' was, amid solemn rejoicings, associated with the holy title of "Brahmarshi" by the full consensus of "ardent admirers, loving friends, reverent fellow-believers and grateful followers" in the Church of the One Only God nearest to his bosom. As for the student world, he was, in one word,

a very idol of hero-worship to vast generations of cherished pupils. Such a fisher of men was he with an uncommon potency of personal magnetism, even as he was such a radiating centre of enlightenment and edification.

In his romantically impressive personality, the soundest culture refined itself into the sweetest as well as the stateliest character. Born a Non-Brahmin, he embraced Vegetarianism early in life. Called to bear the cross of widowerhood at twenty-seven, he exemplified soul-deep devotion to the lofty principle of Monogamy with a loyalty of allegiance emblematic only of his holier passion for Monolatry. He was the universally appraised Apostle of Social Purity with its logical corollary in the Anti-Nautch Crusade. He was one of the founders of the Chennapuri Annadana Samajam and, later, the inspirer as also the shaper of the Maharajah of Pittapuram's manifold bounties as, for instance, in the Orphanage and the Brahmopasana Mandir at Cocanada and also the Andhra Brahmadharma Pracharaka Trust of one Lakh of rupees besides munificent gifts in aid of Pittapur Rajah's College. With him the relief of indigence was verily the vindication of Providence; and as he gave away his whole substance in utter disregard of caste and creed, the tender pulsation of God's Mothe-heart in him not only actuated but accompanied every self-giving gift of his hand. In the inner experiences of the spirit, he walked the mystic path of close and constant companionship with God and at once initiated and illustrated amongst us what he called "the Brahmaism of Regeneration" as distinguished from "the Brahmaism of Reformation." Thus, Purity, Piety and Philanthropy constituted the triple glory of his dedicated life—a life lived in the love-light of the idealist-humanist, the savant-sage and the seer-saint.

The 'Message and Ministrations' of Brahmarshi Venkata Ratnam have been gathered together, so far, in eight handy Volumes with separate Introductions by the present writer. —V. R. R.

The Immortal Soul

The thought of death leaves me perfectly at peace, for I am convinced that our spirit is indestructible, and that its activity continues from eternity to eternity. It is like the sun, which seems to

set only to our earthly eyes, but which in reality never sets but shines without end. All transitory things are but symbols of eternal truth; all that is here insufficient and incomplete finds its perfect accomplishment elsewhere; all mysteries beyond description in words are there realised and fulfilled; the eternal heart of womanhood (the love that moves the sun and the other stars) leads us upwards into heavenly realms."

—Goethe.

God's beautiful World

God has made the world of beauty and of joy. He has blessed earth and its inhabitants, in bounteous ways. But man has by his ignorance, pride and greed often brought long lasting suffering upon himself and his fellow-creatures. Who can recount the misery inflicted by man upon man, by one nation upon another, during all the wars or periods of the domination of one over another which History has recorded?

The Social Faith

As with individuals, so with nations, life without a conscious purpose is the play of chance, desire or the tyranny of the predominant passions. But true heroism is the victory of the soul over the flesh, of faith in one's mission over the pains and pleasures of the body. To expect great deeds without an awakening of the soul is to court failure and disappointment. For why should any body sacrifice his present ease and comfort which is a solid reality for a distant and more or less visionary chance of some benefit to his society? From the individualist point of view the game is hardly worth the candle. And if self-sacrifice had no other higher principle to appeal to, it would always be in a sorry case, indeed. Fortunately, this is not so. All human action derives its impulse from the feelings. Men labour not for the sake of labour, but because they feel the compelling force of some object which draws their feelings. The nature of these objects is determined for each individual by his temperament and circumstances. If the men are all flesh and but little soul, it is futile to call them from the pursuit of pleasure and comfort to sacrifice themselves for others. Equally futile is it to

hope for reform in any direction in which the conscience of the people has lain dormant for ages through ignorance, long habit; or want of thought. A large class of the people everywhere is ordinarily in this condition in regard to most questions of reform, so that much of the labour of reformers in all countries is expended in educating public opinion and awakening the social conscience of the people on the issues involved, in the particular reform in hand. In this country the educating process has to begin at even an earlier stage. For it is not yet clear to all that to everyone there is a social as well as an individual life and that social life involves social duties no less important than individual. These duties do not begin and end with works of charity as ordinarily understood, but extend to all objects of human want, moral, intellectual and spiritual; to liberty, knowledge and equality of position and opportunity. On these latter points the voice of the social conscience among us is silent. It has either had no opportunity to seek light yet, or custom has dulled its edge and false philosophy and religion have created or sanctioned the custom. Public opinion has, therefore, to begin with incorporating the belief that men are born for society and that there is a divine purpose in the divisions of men into societies. For not all countries are alike in their physical features, nor all nations which inhabit them, the same in their aptitudes or capacities. To every natural division of the globe is a certain type of people assigned, just as are its peculiarities of organic life and inorganic substance. All these types of character and aptitude have their use and mission, each its own, in the progress and advancement of humanity as a whole. Each has, therefore, a duty laid on it to preserve itself and develop its special peculiarities. Such self-preservation and development brings to each member of the society, the duty of making for his neighbours their growth and development in physique, intellect, morals and religion as easy as he can. This great task again resolves itself in practice into all manner of duties which have for their object the reform of society, or the happiness and well-being of our neighbours. Such is the spiritual rational of these social duties. To God all men are equal, and the advancement of humanity as a whole an object. This he has ordained to be achieved by the conjoint labours of all races and generations of men. That is how all those natural differences of capacity which we find

between man and man and society and society explain themselves. Every society then has a mission to achieve in this world, and faith in this mission, if and whenever it can be created, cannot but arouse the social conscience to the iniquities which prevail in society. These iniquities are diseases of the social body. They retard, not promote its advancement. Hence their cure is a duty involving, as it does, the salvation or efficiency of society. A faith like this, adds dignity to life, sustains self-sacrifice and gives strength and courage in the midst of reverses, trials and sufferings.

God—the Eternal Centre

The spiritually-minded man lives outwardly like a worldly man but the whole mechanism of his mind is most different. He abjures all special qualifications, rejects all adjectives, hates theatricalities and is content to be as a mere man. Not so the religious buffoon whose speciality lies in his clothes, in his shavings, in his bathing, in his quotations and other displays too many to mention. What is soul if it is not a living soul and what is the worth of the thousand forms of life if there is not a soul to shape and control them? And I declare that God is the life of the universe, the life of the mind and the soul, the eternal centre working out to the verge of the eternal circumference.

—P. C. M.

Peace and Good-Will Among Men

What is peace or what is good-will? You will perhaps say we all know it. I say the deepest things are those really which look the simplest. The things that we realise the least are the things that we think we realise the best. What is our idea of 'peace' as members of a Church that professes to be a Church of which the distinctive note is harmony in religious faith. What is peace? There are many counterfeits of peace. There are many spurious representations of peace. Sometimes peace is regarded as a state of inaction. A man cuts himself from the activity of the world and living in repose, in ease and idleness, he thinks he enjoys peace. Leaving the activities and the pulsating interests of his society he goes into retirement, lives the life of moral and intellectual luxury, and he thinks he is enjoying

peace. What happens to individuals happens to societies and nations as well. There are societies at the present time and there have been societies in the history of the world, who, indifferent to the march of humanity, neglectful of the unceasing progress of the race, are living in a state of isolation and priding themselves upon the peace that they enjoy. They say, let the world think in its own way, we are not concerned about the victories of science, about the triumphs of human endeavour, we only want to enjoy as we are doing 'peace.' I say this is a counterfeit of peace. Let me give you another illustration. There are individuals who are extremely anxious not to have their intellectual composure perturbed and so they say all good things of all men. They are ready to agree to any ideals, any propositions that are put before them. They practically banish the word "no" from their Dictionary, and when twitted with inconsistency, they say we are doing this in the interests of peace. This is not peace. This is intellectual inertia. This is moral and spiritual numbness. You may as well congratulate a paralytic upon the immunity he enjoys from the disturbing effects of physical touch or physical pain. To say "yes" to everything, to be indifferent to moral ideas, to be blind to the truth, is to befog oneself and in the end draw down sure revenge upon oneself. In the end truth ever vindicates itself by visiting the sinner, it does not matter whether the sinner is an individual or a society, with spiritual blindness. There is a third counterfeit of peace, of which the name I think, is indifference. There are men who are too chicken-hearted, too small-minded to care about truth, and such men are absolutely indifferent to what anybody believes. They are cynics at heart and they in their hearts scorn the search after truth. To them all those who are interested in the search after truth are guilty of a foolish waste of time. They are too cynical to risk the unpopularity that will result from avowing this. They lay claim to religious and moral tolerance. They say, Oh! let each man think and believe what he likes, we are equally impartial to all. But let us never forget in the memorable words of Burke that "equal indifference is not equal impartiality." These men very often manage to live in great peace. When a man does not care to interest himself in what you believe you have no interest in challenging that man. These indifferentists, who have no love for spiritual values often pass through life very quietly, very placidly,

and they delude themselves into holding that they are lovers of peace. How often indolence or cowardice or indifference wears the mask of that beautiful virtue 'peace.' We ought then to be on our guard against delusion and lies peace. Let me put before you a conception of peace which I believe will afford some help to you in thinking on this subject. The peace that we are in search of, the peace that Christianity and the other world religions have represented as an object eminently worthy of search, is one that has to be attained in a world of unceasing activity. Therefore it cannot be a peace of moral or intellectual or spiritual quietude. It must be a peace that must come, if it is to 'come', in the midst of intense action. It must not be the peace of death but the peace of life; not the peace of stagnation, but the peace of progress. How will it come? It only comes by each human spirit being at complete harmony with itself. I have expressed my thought in rather philosophical language, but I shall presently make it clear. When the human spirit, when the individual, in all things seeks to be true to the best that is in him, true to his noblest nature, he becomes the heir of peace. Such a life that is at one with its best self, with its deepest spring of activity and hope and aspiration, such a life is almost always, a life in the midst of sorrow and disappointment and always in intense activity. If there is anything that you intensely feel to be worthy of your most earnest seeking, worthy of the utmost expenditure of your utmost power of body, mind and spirit, how is it possible that your life can be one of indolence, one of listlessness. That is an impossibility. The more the compelling power of your spirit gets hold of you, the more active, the more intense, the more fuller of struggle your life becomes. The peace that you have to realise is, as it were, a spring of water, springing up in the midst of hard rocks of circumstance. Not the rest that comes from inaction but the confidence, the assured sense of ultimate success that comes from the feeling that you have not betrayed, that you have faithfully served the best that is in you,—your inner man, call him the oversoul, call him your true self or by any other name you like. When you are in harmony with that man, when you are his faithful servant, then it is that you have got the essence of peace. The peace that we are in search of must not come to us in some ideal world. It must be enjoyed, if it is to

be enjoyed at all, in the midst of the busy active life of our time and our day and our place in this real work-a-day world. —N. G. W.

To thine own self be true.

We are our own enemies and our best friends. We are determined by the laws of nature; we are free so far as our moral world goes: free to choose and to act in the sphere that is our very own, namely our inner, personal life. And nothing convinces us firmly in this experience, nothing steadies us in the path of goodness as the ministry of religion, as communion with God, as day-to-day meditation on his nature, and as day-to-day prayer to Him, that he will give us the strength that makes us men. It is thus that religion, not church or dogma, is the mainstay of morality, its foundation pillar, as it were. Those who maintain that morality will remain even if religion is destroyed, may as well say that a tree will thrive and put forth flower and fruit, when it is uprooted from the soil, or when you poison it at the root! Morality is an eternal verity in the same sense that religion is an eternal verity. And religion is as much a social need as morality. As thou sowest, so shalt thou reap—is not a maxim in any way concerned with reward and punishment in the next world as the return of actions done here. It refers to transformation in our own being, as habits make channels in the human brain, when they are hard to eradicate. And the suffering and joy are not so much corporal as mental; it is bruising of the heart, the searing of conscience, the deadening of all life, the loss of every thing that has value. So is man punished by his own wrong action; so society degrades itself; so are nations confounded and destroyed. Buddha has stated the operation of the law in an impressive way with which we may well conclude this musing without method. Says he in Dhammapada, *"By one's self the evil is done, by one's self one suffers; by one's self evil is left undone; by one's self one is purified. Purity and impurity belong to one's self; no one can purify another. The eloquent preacher is only to show the path; to rouse, incite and gladden men, so that bravely they may tread it themselves. Each one must be a lamp unto himself; holding fast to the truth as a lamp; holding fast to the truth as a refuge, and looking not for a refuge to any one but himself."*

Continuous Revelation

There is also another sense in which religious evolution must be considered a revelation. Just as in the case of a poet or an artist, there are flashes of lights which he gives expression to, by means of words or colour, in the same way from time to time, in the cases of certain individuals, there are flashes of religious truths, which those individuals convey to others, less gifted. Our own Tukaram says in one place, "What possibility is there that an insignificant person like myself should speak such words? It is the sustainer of the universe that made me speak" and in another, "I have broken open the treasure, the things belong to the Lord; I am simply a porter to carry them to you." And in third, he said, "I have been sent to communicate the message." When Tukaram gives expression to such ideas as these, are we to consider that he is telling lies? Certainly not. He says so, because, he really did see flashes of light of which ordinary men have no experience. It is in this special sense, therefore, that the religious evolution is under the direction of God.

If, therefore, the doctrines adopted by the Prarthana Samaj are those found in the most developed forms of religion, be sure our religion is a revealed religion. It is also a revealed religion in two other special senses. For it is the only religion that acknowledges the influence and hand-work of God in all the religions that existed or now exist, and therefore imposes upon us an attitude of sympathy towards all religious beliefs, while hitherto antipathy between different religions has been the general rule. And the study of all these religions has had the effect of clearing the religious vision, so as to enable the leaders of the Samaj to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and has led them to adopt the highest form of truth that has hitherto dawned upon the human mind. It is in these two special senses that the dispensation followed by the Prarthana Samaj may be considered a new Dispensation.

Thus then there is a religion which God himself has placed before us in the fullness of time, when all the races of the world have come together and have been as it were comparing notes. The question is whether you will adopt this new Revelation, the main doctrines of which, however are those of the most highly developed religions, which for this country may be considered to be those of the

Upanishads and the Bhagavadgita, and of the teachings of Saints and Prophets like Tukaram. Will you then accept the best portions of the Upanishads, the Bhagavadgita and of the teachings of the mediaeval saints, supplemented by certain ideas from Buddhism or from the Bible ; or will you adhere to all the religions that go under the name of ordinary Hinduism, the religions which represent all the stages of evolution beginning from the most primitive, such as the worship of trees and stones, serpents and cows, and of fetishes ? Will you accept merely mechanical ceremonials which can have no connection with your moral advancement as your worship of God, or take up the spiritual mode chosen by the Prarthana Samaj, which alone is calculated to purify the heart and elevate it, and prepare you to perform your duties in life ? The existing forms of religion belonging as they do to earlier stages of civilization are destined if India is to advance, to disappear and along with their disappearance, all that is good in the higher religious thought of the country is also in danger of disappearing, unless we deliberately choose it and make it alone our religion. And the existing mechanical modes of worship must be entirely thrown away and the spiritual mode substituted, to bring about the moral reformation of the country which is so urgently needed.

—R. G. B.

Buddhist Precepts.

- (1) We will not show (either by words or actions) anger, violence impatience, jealousy, rancour, or bad temper.
- (2) We will abstain from all back-biting, from unjust criticism, from unkind remarks or hurtful words.
- (3) We will show politeness and consideration to all.
- (4) We will demonstrate in a practical manner our Universal Sympathy with and our fraternal regard for all.
- (5) We will make patient efforts to create or develop in the hearts of children an Ideal as beautiful, noble and exalted as possible, in the hope that this Ideal will serve them as a guide throughout their lives.
- (6) We will do our best to establish brotherhood and unity between all mankind.

(7) We will try and improve our minds by serious study because the more a man knows the more useful he may be to Humanity.

(8) We shall not hurt any living beings whatsoever, but treat them all with kindness.

Life as a Vocation

People who have thought at all have always from the beginning of time been perplexed as to the meaning of life. And various as the moods of men, their gloom and their rapture, their hope and their despair, have been the solutions of the problem that have been sought. I want to consider the question of the meaning of our lives from the point of view that Theism supplies, the point of view, namely, that there is a God behind the shadows, whose will orders all things and in whose will therefore is our peace. There are certain conclusions that follow, or have generally been deduced, from the premiss of Theism, which provide us with means for the interpretation of our lives. One of these is that the God in whom we believe is a moral Being, whose purpose for us and for the world is righteousness. Another is that our lives, the Author of our lives being what He is, shall not vanish presently like a candle blown out, but that God's personal and immortal being, gives us an assurance of a personal immortality. I take it that these are beliefs, more or less assured, of all young theists who have reflected upon the implications of Theism. As William James has expressed it, Theism involves "the affirmation of an eternal moral order and the letting loose of hope." These beliefs have an intimate bearing upon the kind of life I should live in the world and the attitude I should take to those about me in it. Belief in a personal God with Whom I am in moral relations, relations of love and service and duty, gives a character and meaning to my life which it could not have otherwise. It implies, in that fact that my life is a vocation, a call to duty and to service.

One of the arguments for the existence of God is the teleological argument, that is, the argument that there is a purpose in the universe, a divine event to which Creation moves, and that, if there is a purpose, there is a Purposer. The theist's confidence is that the universe has a meaning, that it is not "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." And if its whole is not

meaningless neither will its parts be so. Each life has its place in the whole, as words have their place in a sentence, and, while they contribute to the significance of the whole, they have a significance themselves. So is man's life meaning-full and purposive. We all, whether we will it or not, contribute to the meaning of the universe to which we belong and help in working out its purpose. In that sense no life is insignificant or empty. But to speak of life as a vocation is something more than that. It means that, as God has a purpose for the whole, so there is for each one of us a definite end and purpose in the divine plan which we may discover and accept and in the acceptance of which our lives obtain immense strengthening and re-inforcement. To believe in life as a vocation is to believe on the one hand in God whose hand is laid in guidance upon our lives, and it is to be ready, on the other hand, in self-surrender to accept that as our chief end and live for it.

In the religious catechism that is taught, or used to be taught, to most Scottish children the first question is, "What is the chief end of man?" The answer runs as follows:—"Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever." Thomas Carlyle referring to this question and answer, which he like other Scottish children, had learned in childhood, says, "The older I grow,—and I am now upon the brink of eternity,—the more comes back to me the first sentence of the catechism which I learned when a child and the fuller and deeper its meaning becomes." This is the same question as that of the *summum bonum* which occupied many of the discussions of the philosophers of Athens. The answer of the Shorter Catechism would not have seemed strange to them any more than it did to Carlyle and I do not think it need be rejected by Indian theists. We believe that there is a personal relation between each man and God and to discover and fulfil that relationship is to fulfil the end of our lives and in so doing to glorify our Father in Heaven. A famous prayer of St. Augustine is "Make us what Thou wouldst have us be," and to pray that prayer is to recognise that God has a purpose for our lives in the discovery and acceptance of which is our strength and peace.

We know that a life which has not a purpose or aim is generally ineffective and futile. Even if it is a purely selfish purpose, concentration upon it unifies and strengthens a man's life. No man could

say more truly than, say, Napoleon, "One thing I do." But the one thing upon which his whole energies were lent was a purely selfish and altogether unscrupulous ambition. That is not what the theist means by his chief end or his vocation. And on the other hand there have been men who have been recognised as instruments of a divine purpose without their having consciously surrendered themselves to it or accepted it. So a Hebrew prophet speaks of Cyrus, the Persian king as a "servant of the Lord," and Tamerlane, the wild leader of Central Asian hordes, was called the "scourge of God." That, too is not what we mean by vocation. It is the chief end of my particular life, discovered and recognised by me in the surrender of my will to God, and revealed by Him in my heart, bringing steadfastness and unity to my life.

Steadfastness and unity must always be precious possessions in our distracted and so often, aimless lives and they are possessions that are particularly difficult to acquire in the midst of our modern life with "its sick hurry, its divided aims." The sense of futility that accompanies the absence of a sense of vocation has always been one of the chief sources of pessimism. From the days of Omar Khayyam and the author of Ecclesiastes until today the testimony of the life that is not lived under the sense of such a call has always been "I came like water and like wind I go."

Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow,
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
 To the last syllable of recorded time.

The life that is delivered from discord and emptiness and despair is the life that has the assurance granted to it that it is a fulfilment of a divine purpose, that the hand of God is upon it, guiding it and giving it a meaning in His great thought.

Most of the great men of the West at least have had this assurance of a vocation. If this is not so prominent a feature of the lives of Eastern saints and sages the reason probably is that it is essentially a thought that accompanies a strong theistic faith and where that faith has been absent or weak it is less likely to be found. The instances of such a "call" that occur to one most naturally are those that are recorded in the Christian scriptures as having been granted to Hebrew prophets or Christian saints and apostles. Isaiah saying,

'Here am I, Lord send me' and St. Paul's question "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" give us classical instances of the attitude of surrender that accompanies a divine call. He to whom such a call comes must give himself up in complete submission to the divine purpose, becoming as one of them is called, "a chosen vessel." But it is not only among the saints of the Churches that such an experience is found. The testimony of Dante of how under the influence of the love of the glorified Beatrice he became a dedicated spirit, resolved "to write that concerning her which had never been written of any woman," is the same in kind as that of the prophets and apostles and his task was no less a task given to him by God than were theirs. General Gordon tells us that each morning he used to repeat to himself lines from Browning's *Paracelsus* which express his sense of his vocation :

I go to prove my soul !

I see my way as birds their trackless way.

I shall arrive ! What time, what circuit first,

I ask not : but unless God send His hail

Or blinding fireballs, sleet or stifling snow,

In good time, His good time, I shall arrive :

He guides me and the bird. In His good time !

One could not have a better motto for a life that is lived, as our lives should be lived, under the sense of vocation.—*Dr. N. Macnicol.*

A Source of Joy.

It is a custom among many to separate religion from joyful life. The religious man is expected to be morose, and to put on dark clothes when going to church. He is not expected to share in the joys of ordinary men, but to put on a pinched face and an unnatural appearance. In fact, he is to represent religion as something awful, sombre and to be afraid of rather than to be loved. But this is nothing short of travesty of religion, which really speaking ought to be and is a source of untold joy. If my religion does not bring me health, comfort and happiness, what is its use to me ? Religion in its natural form encourages man to be joyful, helps him to develop his

faculties and removes from him all taint of unnaturalness. It enables him to realise his true dignity and the sacred character of his body which is not to be sinned against in the search after happiness. Thus by bringing man in harmony with nature, does religion enhance the joys of the body and those of the soul—a result which no other power is able to achieve. —V. S. S.

Spiritual Hunger

Among our educated young men who have given up idolatry and are beginning to establish their hearts in positive religion there is an enquiry about the nature and laws of prayer. This is quite natural. For prayer is the alpha of faith, the beginning of new life. Many unfortunately are led away by false and popular notions of prayer, which they can hardly reconcile with their respect for science. Asking an omniscient and immutable God to modify His laws in subservience to our wants and requirements is an intellectual process which does not at all commend itself to their enlightened understanding. Well, this is not prayer; at least it is not that scientific devotion which theists recognise and practise. To them prayer is nothing but the soul's hunger after spiritual food. Every man whose nature is not perverted feels this hunger. As the body feels appetite and seeks relief quite naturally and without any effort or reasoning, so the natural heart hungers after God and truth, and spontaneously offers prayers. And as eating brings nourishment, and with it health, strength and joy, so prayer makes the soul healthy, vigorous and happy. The analogy does not stop here. If you are impelled to eat, you eat daily; a single day's abstinence makes the body sink. So nature impels the soul to pray daily, or there is inanition, and there may be disease and death through starvation. Carry the analogy further. The spiritual, like the bodily, nature instinctively falls into set times of meal. Every day about the same time there is an earnest cry for bread, and the hungry soul becomes impatient. Nay more. The soul, like the body, must have its full measure of food, neither more nor less. So long as hunger is not appeased, the soul will continue to pray. As soon as it is satisfied, there is a disinclination to take in more, and nature seems to say, enough. As in our daily meals, so in our daily prayers there is

uniformity and yet variety. We must have our rice or bread daily and with it, we have a wide variety of curries and dainties that change from day to day, according to our altered tastes or with the season. The adoration of the true God and His attributes is essentially the same always, and so also the general form of prayer in the liturgy. But the prayers which are the fresh out-pourings of the soul, must change and impart a delicious variety to our spiritual meals. Let us only make our daily prayers natural as hunger and thirst, and they will bring us both strength and joy.

In Memoriam Prayer

Eternal Spirit! Thou who hast been from everlasting to everlasting, Thou that ceases not, that changes not, Thou Supreme Reality, Thou art the source of life. Thou art the Giver of joy and peace and salvation. Thou art the Giver of the moral law by which we human beings are constrained by the sense of duty and obligation, and feel that there is a will beyond our own, which it is our duty to obey, that there is an eternal law of righteousness which it is our highest calling and privilege to follow, that there is a bond of love which transcends every other bond, that bond which binds us to one another and to Thee as it were by a golden chain. Oh Thou, Eternal, Immutable fountain of all joy, fountain of all righteousness, fountain of all good, we thank thee That Thou hast implanted in us an unquenchable desire to live in Thee, to feel for Thee, and to find Thee. Oh God, Eternal Father, ever living Reality, all that lives, lives in Thee. For Thy love is the love of all. All beauty is Thy manifestation, and is perfected in Thee. All holiness springs from Thee in whom is no unrighteousness, no darkness. All our aspirations point to Thee. Our hearts unceasingly yearn for Thee, and when Thou comest into them, they are fulfilled, they are satisfied. Oh Eternal Love, Oh Eternal Holiness, Oh Eternal Thought, may we ever live in close communion with Thee! Oh God, when we are alone, when Thy presence and Thy providence, Thy guiding, sustaining love are not filled in our hearts, the world becomes dry and arid like a desert and there is no meaning, there is no purpose, there is no aspiration to lead us on, to draw us forward, to make us soar above the petty things of our perishable life. But Oh Father, Thou

callest us to Thyself by an inevitable necessity. Thou beckonest us on ceaselessly to come unto Thee, and when we come unto Thee, Thou comest unto us, and life assumes a new meaning, a new significance, a new aspect. The perishable is no longer perishable because we feel it linked unto that which is immortal. There is no low and no high, there is no great and there is no small, because everything is necessary and holy and perfect in Thy perfection. Oh God, Thou art the best comforter, Thou art the best friend, Thou art the only and all sufficient solace in all the changes and chances, in all the troubles and afflictions of our changeful life. We come to Thee at this time with heavy hearts, bowed down with sorrow, because it has pleased Thee to take from us one¹ who was so universally loved, and honoured and regarded as a leader of men, one in whose heart Thou didst implant an unquenchable love for his country and for his countrymen, one who toiled so many years and so whole-heartedly to promote the good of his people, political, social and moral, one round whom the affections of his own people had twined themselves with such strength that we could not contemplate our public life as without him. Oh God, it has pleased Thee to take away that leader from us, and our hearts are full of grief and sorrow and doubt and misgivings, and yet, Father, we cannot but believe that all things are in accordance with Thy eternal purpose, and that purpose is good beyond our furthest thought, and beyond our uttermost conception, and so, Oh Father, in this hour of affliction, in this hour of desolation, we can still look up to Thee and say and feel "all is well in the hands of our Father," who ever worketh for the best, and while we grieve as becomes men like us, for one who did so much for our country, and meant so much to us in our struggle for a better and nobler, a more independent form of national life, we yet cannot but thank Thee that it pleased Thee to give the country such a life. We thank Thee with the deepest gratitude for that unselfish love of his countrymen which was the most striking characteristic of our deceased leader. We thank Thee that the attractions of power and position and wealth and name which draw so many away from the path of unselfish, disinterested service, had no power over him, had no fascination for him, and that for the many years he toiled, he toiled like a plain, unofficial man, without caring for name or fame, that he risked obloquy, risked misunderstanding, risked every form of

(1) Gopal Krishna Gokhale.

danger to his reputation, and we pray, oh God, that the example of such a life may be an inspiration to us all. The future is before us, oh Father, and we believe that in Thy providence it is a great future, it is a noble future, it will be a future of great achievement for our country and our countrymen. Oh grant that the example of this life may be as an incense of sweet savour rising to Thee, and thence shedding forth its fragrance among us! May we who are left behind, feel inspired and stimulated by that ceaseless, indefatigable life. Oh, may it lead us to put aside our selfishness, our apathy, our indolence! May we feel that now he has passed away, there is upon us a call to still greater effort, to still nobler self-sacrifice, to still more selfless devotion, than has been the case with us in the past! We pray that Thy love would bring comfort to the bereaved members of his family. We pray that those who belong to the noble brotherhood that was founded by him may in this hour of their affliction feel that Thou art with them, that the work that he did was work done under Thy eye, with Thy fear, and for Thy glory, and that if they only walk in his footsteps, they will be guided and helped in the hour of their need. According to their need will be their strength. May Thou impress this conviction upon their hearts! May the honorable cause that he espoused be rather strengthened than weakened by his loss. Bless our country. Bless the band of workers who in various directions are endeavouring to serve her for the good of her multitudinous people. Bless every noble endeavour, every honest toil, every effort made in whatever direction, to reform that which is time-worn, that which is old, that which is unserviceable, that which acts as an hindrance. Bless Thou with reforms in all branches, whether it is political or social or educational, or whatever it happens to be. Do Thou instil into the hearts of all those who may be engaged in national regeneration that all noble impulses come from Thee, and that they are engaged in Thy holy service, and so may the entire length of our public and private life be raised and ennobled under Thy inspiration and by Thy blessing! We ask for Thy blessing upon our congregation. We ask for more grace to serve Thee. We ask for more love towards our fellowmen. We ask for more humility. Oh God, do Thou make us fit for Thy service. May we day by day individually and as a church feel the call of that service growing stronger and stronger upon us! May we feel more and more that our life is not our own, that we are

consecrated beings, and that to live means for us to live for the realization of Thy perfect will in our own lives! Hear us in these our prayers, guide us aright in the work that may lie before us, and day by day give us the desire in increasing measure to bless Thee, to praise Thy holy name, and to consecrate ourselves entirely, wholeheartedly, unselfishly towards the realization of Thy kingdom upon this earth. We bless Thee. We praise Thee. We magnify Thee, and we would now commit ourselves to Thee in faith and in trust to lead our hearts unto Thyself in prayer and aspiration, and to speak to us a message that will comfort and cheer us on in the work that may lie before us.

—N. G. W.

Practical faith

"I love to see piety at its work better than in its play or its repose; in philanthropists better than in monks and nuns, who gave their lives to contemplation and wordy prayer, and their bodies to be burned. I love piety embodied in a Gothic or Roman Cathedral, an artistic prayer in stone, but better in a nation well-fed, well-housed, well-clad, instructed well, a natural prayer in man or woman. I love the water touched by electric fire, and stealing upwards to the sky, lovely in the light of the uprising or slowly sinking sun. I love it not the less descending down as dew and rain, to still the dust in all country roads, to cool the pavement in the heated town, to wash the city's dirtiest lane, and in the fields giving grass to the cattle, and bread to men. What is fair as sentiment, is lovelier as life, what is noble as thought, is fulfilled in nobler action. What is selfless in prayer is redeemed only by conduct suited to that prayer. Watch and pray as all well. Plunge and work in life is still better, with faith in God and love for fellow-man."

The Path of Prayer

(11-7-15)

"He prayeth well, who loveth well

"Both man and bird and beast"

—Coleridge.

In the sphere of religion, the human mind is like an iron anvil. From time to time, it needs a hammer-stroke of calamity that it may

generate a spark of true faith and realize the only reality :—

“There’s a divinity that shapes our ends,
“Rough-hew them how we will.”

Material progress, the outcome of continual peace, often tends to relax this belief in the human mind which, then, even refuses to recognise the existence of a higher world of moral order. Evil weeds of agnosticism and atheism begin to grow apace, when men look upon themselves as the ultimate authors of human destiny.

There is, no doubt, much truth in the doctrines that attach a high importance to the gospel of work, and formulate the maxims, “Man is the architect of his fate,” “work is prayer,” etc. For it cannot be gainsaid that work really constitutes one of the practical means of the elevation of the human spirit, especially by giving full scope to a display of all the higher faculties of man that are otherwise likely to lie dormant. But work, if an incentive to the nobility of the mind, is also a means to its degradation and corruption. It is only when man is ever conscious of a world of moral order whose laws are inevitable and immutable that his work is restricted within proper confines to yield the desideratum. But once he spurns aside all conception of the Deity, of Divinity, or of a mightier Energy guiding and regulating individual energies, the effort outgrows the control of the agent, the inventions recoil on the inventor, and consequently, in the long run, both man and his work suffer a disastrous ruin.

When, in this way, material progress meets with this tragic fall, the spiritual element in man wakes up once more to its faith in the supreme Author who, in reality, threads the destiny of every individual. The realization of this Author then becomes an end in itself, when every human action is consecrated on the altar of the mighty Law-giver.

The great melo-drama that is being acted in our own days affords copious instances that fully bear out our assertions. The solicitude for worship, prayers and offerings has now risen to its highest pitch : Churches are now thronged with crowds of pious devotees who, at one time, could ill afford to take even a Sabbath rest. The men of the cloth are now busy offering prayers to God, performing sacraments, or conferring blessings upon swords and

bayonets. A very signal instance is that of the Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria. On the eve of the present war, he is said to have issued a proclamation addressed to the children of his nation beseeching them, in the most pathetic words, to keep clean hands and heart, to strictly abide by their faith, and above all to offer prayers to the Almighty for the salvation of his empire, then and now at stake. Such incidents may safely be looked upon with an optimistic eye. For there is no mistaking the fact that a ray of spiritual sunshine is yet struggling its approach to us through the thickest atmosphere of direst gloom, when clouds are not clouds of vapour but of gas and smoke, when showers are not showers of liquid crystals but of shells and bullets, when the earth is not flooded with floods of water but of blood, and when man is not blessed with the blessing of life but of death !

To such an advantage does the present bright faith appear on the dark back-ground that it does not fail to betray its narrow range. For what can account for the anxiety of prayers that are not prayers but an ignorance of a really rational faith, of the true significance of worship ? Can prayer ever undo what is past done ? Will God ever change the laws that are immutable ?

The truth is the world was yesterday on the threshold of spiritual degradation. But the shocks which it is now receiving will awaken it to the eternal varieties of faith. The initial stages of this revival may be narrow in their spirit. But they are bound to grow broad and more spiritual with the advance of time. This spiritual progress will be best promoted by the path of prayer, prayer which opens the heart of man to God and makes him realise his little nature in the presence of his Divine Father. This path of prayer has its three stages corresponding to the objective, rational and moral stages in the development of the human mind. Corresponding to the objective consciousness of the child the initial stage is that of "the objective realization of God." By this we do not mean idol-worship. It has no place, whatsoever, in the elevation of the human spirit. We rather mean image worship, the only object which God has made after his image being nature. Nature is our real scripture of endless revelations. Nature is our perennial fountain of inspiration. It requires no efforts on our part to observe her works, and

realize the one Hand behind all the varying phenomena. The observation of Nature's manifold works compels us to retire within ourselves to contemplate the Identity in the midst of diversities. The variety of forms disappears and the unity takes the uppermost place in our mind. Such an initiation into observation of Nature guides us to the realization of the great Identity that rules over human destinies.

The path of prayer then is illumined with three lamps. The first emits *the light of the sense* with which we behold Nature. The second is *the light of reason* with which we realize the Supreme Identity. And the last that emits *the light of the spirit* with which we contemplate God, the fountain of eternal bliss. Let our spiritual worship then begin with the eye and end with the soul. "The desire of the heart," says Ruskin, "is also the light of the eyes."—D. V. S.

Social Service

It is a very encouraging sign of the times that a social spirit is manifesting itself in the land. The call to serve the community is being readily responded to and young men are coming out in increasing number to take some part or other in all the diverse public movements which are carried on for the elevation of the country. And this enthusiasm to work for the public good is as universal as it is natural in that it is evident in all different spheres of national activities. Some are endeavouring to achieve political greatness by securing a predominant influence to the opinion of the public in the government of the country. Some are striving to remove those pernicious social practices and customs which have degraded the country and led to its degeneration. Some have given themselves up to the improvement of agriculture and the development of industries, trade and commerce. Others are working for spreading education and elevating the masses. And different religious movements have secured enthusiastic workers who have made great sacrifice for the advancement of their cause. Further the universality of this new spirit is as extensive in respect of workers as it is with respect to work. It has affected all the classes, high and low, advanced and depressed. Even those standing at present in the lowest rank of social hierarchy have shown unmistakable signs of discontent with

their present lot and the consequent desire to raise themselves up. And it is a great pleasure to observe our women standing on their own legs and working to up-lift themselves so that they may be able to play their part with credit in all national activities. All the places, from the village with its modest Co-operative Credit Bank to the city with its big ambitious schemes, are throbbing with this spirit of service of society and humanity.

But what is the underlying meaning and significance of all this phenomena? What is the *raison d'être* of it all? It is the divine spirit asserting itself in a way as it never did before in all the history of this ancient land. All our philosophies have taught us that life is a misery and that the *samsar* or worldly existence is full of griefs and woes and that the souls have been condemned to it as a result of the deeds good or bad, done in previous existences. Hence the true aim of our present existence should be to get rid of *Karma* to cease acting in order to obtain Release from the never-ending cycle of births. So there prevailed the general conviction that, if a man wished to reach Release he must renounce the world, a life in which involves those perilous actions. Hence the ascetic is the truly religious man. The lack of public spirit and indifference and apathy towards matters of public welfare which are so often to be found in all the epochs of Indian history, may be ascribed in a large measure to this unnatural teaching. If men have acted in the world and lived highly honoured and renowned careers, it was because this philosophy was powerless to suppress the innate impulse which requires beings endowed with life to develop all their capacities and use them to the best effect. It is this impulse which is finding scope and field for action in the new era that is dawning over this land. Contact with another civilization and an altered environment full of life, action, motion and industry have favoured its rapid growth to the relaxation of the grip of that selfish ideal which considered man as though he were a solitary being whose only concern was with the ultimate Reality. The Creator has given life to us to live it. He has endowed us with powers, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual and He expects us to use them, for the benefit of those amongst whom we live. He calls on us to be his instruments in the grand evolution of mankind to which human history bears an unmistakable witness. Man is essentially social. From his birth he is surrounded

by the love of mother and father, brothers and sisters. As he grows, the circle of his love expands and embraces friends. He feels compassion for those who are miserable and his heart moves him to extend a helping hand to them. Thus he is led on, by the inner divine impulse, to feel and work for all those whom he can reach, and to expend all his powers in their service. It makes him happy with the happiness of others; it makes him identify their welfare with his. His heart is full of the bliss, the love, the joy that pervades this universe of the Blissful and the All-Loving; and he willingly bends himself to serve and minister.

And it is the working of this heavenly inspiration under the favourable circumstances of modern times that we are witnessing now. It is manifesting itself in unexpected places, in the minds of persons who a few years back would not have been thought capable of devoting their time and energy to matters of public welfare; and young men are responding to calls in service of their country. But they are at present mere unconscious instruments. They are not aware of what is the ultimate driving force of all their activities of self-forgetfulness. They are being carried away by the rushing stream, they know not how. And if this ignorance and unconsciousness is allowed to continue there is no knowing when we may relapse back into the old order of apathy and indifference; and, unless we are prepared in time for the contingency, a weariness will overtake the young enthusiasts for want of a sustaining inspiration. It therefore behoves us all to learn that it is the heavenly love that incites us to forget ourselves and work for social happiness; that it is God calling on us to feel ourselves as His children and to work like brethren for one another's good. We must give a religious grounding in our very natures to the new spirit that it may not leave us for all time to come. We must base all our activities on religion which touches the innermost recesses of man's heart and determines the ultimate motives of his action. It decides the intrinsic nature of the soul. Hence it is impossible for the old conception of religious ideals and the new spirit of social service with their essential conflict to co-exist for a long time and unless we recast the former and base them on those ideas which conceive man and the world as part of an organic whole, deriving their dignity and worth from God, the overruling power of

the universe, the ascetic ways of thought will undoubtedly predominate and destroy the incipient social and human tendencies. Let it never be said of us that we were so foolish and ill-fated as to turn away the *Kamadhenu* that had approached our door. Let us beware in time and realise that it is divinity calling on us to work in new fields and in methods but recently discovered. —Y. V. B.

Love—the Revealer

God and man become one, united in communion and fellowship, when man worships God in the right spirit of devotion and prayer. It is a matter of personal experience, to be felt and realised by each one for himself. The proper way to know God is to love Him. Love alone reveals to man God's true nature. The consecration, blessedness, peace and joy which come out of this overflowing love fortify the soul, lift it up and transform his whole being. Live such a life and realise the infinite. There is no better antidote to doubt than action, no better medicine for cheerlessness and gloom than prayer and communion with Him who is the Giver of all good. The aim of life should be to unfold the best that is in us by that touch divine. There cannot be a greater tragedy in life than to be used for base purposes, for purposes not of our own choice. And the choice should be made with trust in God and love for man. Virtue is, at bottom, the courage and patience to live our lives, and not an existence modelled upon prevailing modes of fashion for seeming applause, a "life in the lips of other men." Dare to live such a life; and existence becomes a blessing, though it may not be the same as happiness. The proof of God is in the living of such a life.

—St. Ramdas.

Nature's Worship

From many of the beautiful songs and sentiments of all truly religious people in all parts of the world it is clear that they have understood the great truth that the whole Nature is engaged in the worship of God. Some songs say that the sun, the moon, the stars, trees, plants &c. sing the praise and glory of God. Rather, they are doing so unremittingly without any respite whatever

continually giving forth their own virtue which is their very life, thus playing their absolutely necessary part in the worshipful harmony of the whole congregation, for the good of the universe without caring for recompense or reward. They are adding to the volume of that harmony which is continually evolving until it reaches the stage of "that far off divine event" as the poet says, which is the consummation and the culmination of the purpose of creation. The sun has been giving its life-giving light and that unceasingly for millions of years for the good of the solar system, and that is but one single act out of the whole congregational worship of service and sacrifice. How incalculably productive of good and great results this divine service of the sun is! Has not the moon shining with its mild, calm splendour added to the joy and peace of the world for millions of years? And what do the trees and plants, rivers and brooks, mountains and hills, and in fact all the objects in Nature, that we call out of our pride and presumption low and mean, do not all these continually and unceasingly add their very life and light to the universal worship for the benefit of all. What one grand act of universal worship is this all! Is there not rising forth from the very heart of the universe a perpetual harmony of worshipful sacrifice and service and a song of praise of vast and wonderful melodies and symphonies.

And if all Nature perpetually worships God, does it not call on us to join the congregation? May we respond to the call, we who call ourselves human beings and are proud of our superior position in the universe, and do likewise by adding our voice to this mighty harmony and thereby ennoble our noble nature still more! May we thus play our part in the universal harmony for that consummation of the whole which we but feebly feel!

Giving is Receiving

Lord make me an
 Instrument of your Peace
 Where there is hatred let me so love
 Where there is injury pardon
 Where there is doubt faith
 Where there is despair hope

Where there is darkness light
 Where there is sadness joy.
 O Divine Master grant
 That I may not so much seek
 To be consoled as to console
 To be understood as to understand
 To be loved as to love.
 For It is in giving that we receive
 It is in pardoning that we are pardoned
 It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
 —*St. Francis of Assisi.*

Religion for the Young

It is ordinarily believed that Religion is meant not for the young so much as for the old. Perhaps the doctrine of *Ashrams* is responsible partially for this belief. The doctrine that the retirement from wordly duties at a particular time and renunciation of the world altogether should come only at particular periods of our life, may have degenerated with the lapse of time in the minds of the ordinary people that Religion is not so much for the young, who should be for the world, but for the old who must prepare for their death. Thus somehow or other Religion has come in our country to be associated with old age rather than youth. People think that youthfulness is meant for enjoyment, pleasures and worldliness, and old age for gravity, solemnity and other—worldliness. But no mistake can be greater than this.

Of course it must be said that Religion transcends all states of life. It takes us into Eternity, far above all the stages of our life here. It transcends Time, Space, Condition and Circumstances. But if Religion, which may be said to be a sort of eternal youthfulness of the spirit, is specially related to any period of life, it is the youthfulness and not the old age. It is meant for the young in spirit, wherever they may be, whether amongst youthful people or old people. But as there are more people with the youthfulness of spirit amongst the young than amongst those in any other stage of life, Religion is specially related to this period of our life.

Speaking of angels, Swedenborg says that they grow ever in youthfulness, and not in old age like people on earth : *i. e.* the older an angel, the younger he is, so that the oldest is the youngest. In other words this may be said to be a growth in eternal youthfulness, which may be said to be one of the main phases of a spiritual life.

That it is easier to infuse this eternal youthfulness of the spiritual life into the young in age may be seen from the following quotations from some writers on modern Science and Philosophy. Says Mr. Boyce Gibson in his book "God with us," "In so far as we freely ally ourselves with this power that springs from the fountain of our youth and direct this greatest of passions, (*viz.* Love), however vaguely, to the greatest of all objects, God, we have, in our adolescent way, already solved the problem of life in principle, and all the graces of religion and idealism, and even genius, must follow from our loyalty to this alliance." Further on he says "It is a favourite thought with Prof. Hall that *Adolescence as the most plastic of all the ages of man, must be the starting point for all attempts at raising and redeeming his present nature.* If regeneration is ever to lift us to a higher plain, the adolescent virus will be its mainspring.....The point of departure for higher and more evolved forms is adolescence and not adulthood, just as upward steps in the development of the pylon have not been from the terminal types of earlier periods, but have started from stages further back."

Let all educators, reformers and well-wishers of the Human Race lay the following passages of the Professor well to their heart. "For those prophetic souls interested in the future of our race and desirous of advancing it, *the field of adolescence is the quarry in which they must seek to find both goal and means.* If such a higher stage is ever added to our race, it will not be by increments at any later plateau of adult life, but it will come by increased development of the adolescent stage, which is the bud of promise for the race."

The following words of Mr. Gibson and Prof. Hall, if engraved on his or her heart by every youthful boy or girl, would certainly make of him or her a better and nobler man or woman.

"The inspirations of later life have their main source in this springtime of the soul, the age when all become geniuses for a season, very brief for most, prolonged for some, and permanent for

the best. And old age itself is mainly dependent on adolescence for whatever freshness it takes with it to the grave, for, as Prof. Hall puts it, 'one of the functions of this flood-time of life is to irrigate old age and make it green.' The essential condition for the prolonging of adolescence is self-control. The want of control implies arrest both physical and psychical, the arrest of a growth which reaches its normal culmination only at the close of the adolescent period. Youth is 'the golden age of sense when the soul exposes most surface, as it were, to the external world' and its natural activity is towards sensuousness. But yielding to mere and gross sensual pleasure shortens the growth period, and the only way to prolong it and attain an ever higher and fuller maturity for the race is by the plain old virtue of self-restraint."

Thus youthfulness is the rich fruitful field wherein the seed of spiritual life grows the most. It is the spring-time of life the passage from which to the eternal spring time which is the spiritual life is most easy. It is the period of life on which the eternal youth of the spiritual life can be engrafted the best. Youthfulness is the time when the child enters upon a new life, a life of Love, Strength, Sacrifice and Hope, and these qualities are the essence of Religion when they have God as their goal.

Let, therefore, all reformers and educators, and especially the leaders of religious movements, know the full value of youth and what wonderful results can be obtained from this mine of spiritual force and wealth. And above all let youths know the full value of this their golden age, spring-time of their life, which, if used well by being kept under proper self-control—a task the more easily to be accomplished by *Bhakti* or Love of God and His service—would make them eternally youthful angels, the strong and fearless servants of God.

Look Within

Deeper than sin, deeper than evil is goodness. There can be naught of evil where there is God. Deep down in the sea of the soul are the unmovable rocks of wisdom and truth. Against these, all error and darkness and all evil must perish. On the surface there may be the violent noise of hurrying winds of desire, tempests of

seething passion, hours of evil and darkness. But one moment of Realisation is omnipotent. It sweeps aside all manner of raging and rampant evil. It is like the effulgence of the sun, blasting all darkness. Therefore, even in the darkness, remember the Light; even in the midst of thy sinning call upon the name of the Lord. And He the Lord shall hearken to thy prayers. There is no power greater than the soul's own. One glimpse of the Divinity within will help to dissipate sin and ignorance. Look ever within; in essence thou art free, thou art pure, thou art divine. Claim thy heritage and live.

Light and Darkness

In ordinary daily spiritual life we find there always two opposite conditions. Take the most palpable life. You find, there is day and there is night: there is sunshine and there is darkness: there is sorrow and there is joy. We find, in the mysterious wisdom of Providence the conditions of life are so arranged that there is always a dark side and a bright side. We generally prefer in our thoughts and in our wishes that the bright side may be always the longer, that life may be one continuous song of happiness. But if we think deeply on the matter we shall find that without the dark side, without the shade, life would not be worth living. The darkness has a purpose as well as the day. For instance, who would like it if all the twenty-four hours of the day were full of sunshine? The whole creation would be unable to recuperate its energies spent in the day's work by the sweet restorer of nature, sleep. Suppose it was summer all the year round, life then would be quite unbearable. We are still to recognise that this economy of nature must have its counterpart, not only in the outside world, but also within our mind. Who would like, for instance, the kind of happiness which has not its shadow side either in one's own life or in the sorrow and suffering of other people. It is said that pity is a divine virtue. It is sent on the Earth to melt the hearts of men for the suffering of those that are weak and helpless. This is the lesson which religion alone pre-eminently teaches us. In our own lives there are moments of high, pure and exalted feelings, and there are moments of deep depression, when life seems to be mere emptiness, when the sun is blotted from the heavens, and when we feel that there is nothing good or joyful in the world. The greatest

problem of religion is how to continue the moments of exaltation, of spiritual inspiration into the moments of darkness and depression that come over us. When the night comes, what do we do? We do not complain of the night, but man has invented fire. He has got artificial means of continuing the light till when the sun rises again. The higher our spiritual exaltation, the deeper is the valley of depression into which we are apt to be plunged. Whether Christ or Buddha or any other great saint, they all at some places have described the glory of God, and at other places they have prayed to God to free them from spiritual darkness. What we ought to do is to sustain ourselves in those moments of depression which come over us all in quick succession. A man with no religious impulse is free from these feelings. It is the man with spiritual instincts who exposes himself to religious depression. How he ought to save himself in the midst of this peril is his constant anxiety. Those who move on the hill-tops are always on the verge of precipice. A worldly man has neither the joy nor the anxiety which a religious man is exposed to. He moves on the ordinary level of a work-a-day life. In all religions there is such a thing as Sadhana or religious discipline. This I consider to be the most important purpose of a Church. Otherwise every individual would suffice for himself. It is the Church that fills the gap between religious exaltation and religious depression; for when my moment of depression comes, it will be the moment of exaltation of some other brother who can help me in tiding over the moments of depression. We have discarded most of those forms and ceremonies and practices by which other faiths have sought to safeguard the religious inspiration of their followers. Those ceremonies, while they were originally intended for this purpose, that is, to help men to tide over the moments of lack of inspiration, gradually became themselves the chief end in view, and like weeds in a field, they choked the inner life. To avoid this danger, we have made it a fundamental principle of this Church that every man must depend for his spiritual inspiration on his own conscience, that he must be constantly thinking about God's ways, and that in that way alone can the religious life be preserved. We have laid a very hard task upon ourselves, a task, the difficulty of which you will realise when you remember that even in great faiths where there was a great, a potent personality behind each of them, where at first all forms were discarded, even

those faiths afterwards began to formulate rituals and ceremonies. By the necessity of our nature we are always tending to become mechanical. Look at our habits. We begin with small things which afterwards grow into habits. Our ideals get lost and the action becomes mechanical. We have to save ourselves in the Theistic movement from the far greater danger than that which confronts the votaries of other faiths. This we can do only if we always take pains to keep our mind upon the central principle of our creed, namely the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. The brotherhood of man is the chief thing that reminds us of the Fatherhood of God. We have no bells, we have no incense, but it is the brotherhood of man, the service of man, that stands for us for all ritual, for all ceremony. Service of man is therefore a vital and fundamental part of this Theistic Church. It is a fact repeatedly admitted by great thinkers that in the service of man we find the solution of the apparently insoluble problem of sorrow and sadness of life. In comforting others you feel yourself comforted, and therefore, this social service, the service of our brothers, the service of those who are not strong, who are sorrowful, it is this service which brings to us in a way which is not apparent, but which is quite genuine and which can be realised by everyone who tries it, which brings home to us the love of God, the blessing which in spite of what seems to us darkness, God in his infinite goodness showers upon us. We have freed ourselves from the formalities of most religious faiths, but in the place of those formalities we have got this one thing, namely this conscious brotherhood of man and this persistent effort to serve our brothers. To the extent, that we develop this spirit of service of our brethren, our faith in God becomes quickened, our knowledge of the living kindness of God becomes established, and we are able to face the world in all its doubts, difficulties and trials with confidence, and it may be with something of courage also. Therefore the essential part of this Church is that we have to realise first the brotherhood of man in our own lives, so that we may realise the Fatherhood of God who is the Inspirer of all that is true and noble and good.

—K. N.

The Poise of Mind.

Cultivate passivity ! you are altogether too irresponsible and too aggressive. Before you see the faults of others and criticise them without mercy, discover your own faults. If you cannot bridle your tongue, let it rant against yourself, not against others.

First of all, keep your own house in proper order. Such precepts as these are in direct accordance with the highest philosophy of self-realisation. For there can be no self-realisation without character. Humility, meekness, gentleness, forbearance, the non-seeing of evil in others—all these are the practical elements in Realisation. Pay no attention to what others do to you, be busied with your own improvement.

When you learn this you have mastered a great secret. Egotism is at the bottom of everything. Root out egotism. As for passion, keep careful guard. You cannot be sure of victory over it until your body is laid on the last pyre. Make your mind the burning ground of your passion and burn into ashes all your desires, if you desire to be free even in this life. So alone can you rise, and realise yourself. For passions and desires are wayward things. They possess and overpower you and often bring death in life.

—V. N. N.

Harmony of Civilisations

Compared with the life of an individual, Humanity is very old indeed. But compared with the life of this planet of ours Humanity is quite young. "It gives liberty and breadth of thought," says Amiel, "to learn to judge our own epoch from the point of view of universal history, history from the point of view of geological periods, geology from the point of view of astronomy." It is this liberty and breadth of thought that gives balance to the mind and enables it to appreciate things in their true light and perspective. Different nations and races in their vanity may applaud their own civilisation as the best and make light of the advancement of others. But humanity still in its childhood, has yet to attain the liberty of thought which will enable it to see the harmony of all civilisations. Unity in difference, harmony in variety is the keynote of the whole

creation. The beauty and charm of nature lies in this harmony of the various objects which constitute it. It reveals the presence of one Mind immanent in all things. That Mind unites and co-ordinates so as to produce a thorough co-operation and consummation. That Mind is working out the evolution of humanity and will through its various component units produce a higher civilisation, harmonising their differences with an inner essential unity that will bind them together as members of one family. It is for man to understand this great truth and work in consonance with the Divine purpose. But he is still far from it. Different nations and races look on one another with false pride of their supposed superiority. An attempt to understand the working of the mind and heart of others is sadly lacking. Again and again in the history of humanity we find this alienation between the different sections of mankind, misunderstanding, hatred and contempt sway their actions to the ruin and loss of humanity as a whole. Not hundred years pass without a repetition of this phenomenon in some part of the world or other. Some gain wisdom by experience, and become humble before the correcting power of God. But others intoxicated with power and material resources would only learn the lesson by the terrible trials of similar struggles. They are moths running to the flame and burning themselves out. This has been so to this day. Humanity has yet to enter upon a higher stage. When man attains it, he will see that the good of one or a few is the good of all. He will then realise that the good achieved by one nation is for the benefit of all nations; that no one nation can claim the exclusive privilege of all good but has something to learn from others; that the different nations form one human family and that their achievements are for the benefit of all; and that there is an harmony behind all those civilisations working itself out in the history of humanity.

Public Opinion

Why concern yourself as to the opinion of others? What can such an attitude of mind avail you? So long as you look for the regard of others, so long you may be sure that conceit doth still hold the citadel of your heart. Be righteous in your own eyes: Then others may say what they will, you shall take no heed. Seek no

advice; follow your own higher intelligence, and inclination. Experience alone will teach you. Waste not your time in idle speech. It will avail you nothing. Each must guide himself by his own experience. Therefore, who can advice another? Depend upon yourself in all ways, look to yourself and within for guidance, not to another. Your sincerity will make you steadfast. Your steadfastness will bring you to the goal. Your sincerity will also make you resolute, and your resolution will make you overcome all fear. Thus alone will God's blessings come to you and will ever lead you on the right path.

—V. N. N.

Love, the law of life

To master the baser feelings of anger, resentment and vengeance by relying on one's own will and strength of mind, by considerations of inferiority and superiority, by thoughts of utility or otherwise as the case may be, is a very difficult task indeed. To scale the dizzy heights of goodness is no common feat, and human efforts however great invariably fail. In this struggle of self-development human will must be supported by a living faith in the beneficent working of Providence.

Let us therefore contemplate this question from the sublime heights of God's all-pervading love. Let us think of the beauty and freshness of the sweet-scented flowers as they spring from the soil. Let us think of the clear and transparent waters of the bubbling stream; let us watch the slow and majestic march of the river as it flows down to meet the waters of the ocean, fertilizing and sweetening everything by its magic touch; let us stand on the sea-shore and watch the ocean now roaring with the strength of ten thousand giants, now calm and quiet moving sweetly like a little child. Think of the mountains bending their heads in silent adoration of the infinite power which rules the universe. The sapphire of the heavens is an unending source of joy, and the melting beauty of the stars as they move in their appointed course soothes the troubled and feverish brows and brings serenity and calm to the lacerated heart. Watch all these and say whether God has not created all these irrespective of the goodness or badness of man? For He maketh the sunshine in the heavens for the benefit of the rich and the poor, the

good and the bad alike. Why should man make distinctions? Why should he be the source of misery and pain to others? In all these things of beauty why should he be the only vile creature? Especially when we know that each and every one of us has within him a spark of the Divine it behoves us that we should endeavour earnestly to bring the kingdom of God on earth by obeying His will, and we can obey His will by having a living faith in His all-pervading love. If we believe that love is the law of life, if we believe that love and not hatred is the source of all that is good and noble on this earth, then let us follow the principle in our lives.

Manliness

Learn from the earliest days to inure your principles against the perils of ridicule, you can no more exercise your reason if you live in the constant dread of laughter, than you can enjoy your life if you are in the constant terror of death. If you think it right to differ from the times, and to make a point of morals, do it, however rustic, however antiquated, however pedantic it may appear; do it not for insolence, but seriously and grandly—like a man who wore a soul of his own in his bosom and did not wait till it was breathed into him by the breath of fashion.

—*Sydney Smith.*

Inward Peace

True peace is not to be found, but in the possession of God: and the possession of God cannot be attained but by faith and obedience: remove all forbidden objects: renounce all unlawful desires: cast off all earnest care and anxiety: desire only God: seek only God: and then you shall have peace—such a peace as the world shall not be able to disturb. For what can trouble you? Is it poverty, disgrace, disappointments, outward and inward crosses? You should see all these in the hand of God, as great favours, which He vouchsafes to give you a share in. Then the world will have a new appearance to you, and your peace prove inviolable. —*Fenelon.*

Life and Death

Life follows Death and Death succeeds life and under this double dispensation man swings backwards and forwards "a pendulum between smiles and tears." The majority of us remain indifferent to this ever recurring succession, this persistent condition of human existence—this supreme duality that sways the universe of matter and force, consciousness and moral struggle until it is poignantly brought home to us by some overwhelming catastrophe that apparently seems to crush us.

Death is the shadow of life. It pursues and clings to life from the moment of its conscious manifestation. In the universe there is nothing more permanent than change. Flux and reflux is the one note pervading all phenomena. Growth, decay, life and death mark in all their infinite variations—the phases of manifested existence. The mineral, the plant, the animal and man all are constantly changing from moment to moment. In the twinkling of an eye the present shades off into the past and the future becomes the present. Time takes its toll from every one of us without haste and without rest. We plan, we realize and the next moment we have to forego the pleasure of our realization. The prize is in the process and the life process or rather the moving procession of all living beings towards death and through death again into rejuvenated life, is meant as a stage for enforcing upon man the supreme need of discipline, self-surrender and calm self-possession.

Death and life are mysteries. They are baffling and painful mysteries. But in the dispensation of Providence they are meant to stimulate us to build up our being on things permanent, on things that endure. Our trials and tribulations are meant to arouse us to the seriousness of life. They harken us back to the God within. They compel us to beware that the night cometh when a man cannot work. They admonish us to plan for to-day and not wait upon the morrow. Do the duty that lies nearest, that is most immediate. Attend to it whole-heartedly with all your powers focussed on the need and the call of the moment, and never wait upon chance or the future. For very often than not, tomorrow may dawn but then it may mean the darkness of the silent grave for your individual self. Death enforces also the lesson of cheerfulness, serene self-surrender.

Beware of death in the midst of life. Life becomes then a sacred trust to be returned to the Maker multiplied hundred-fold when the time comes to return it to Him who gave it us. Pleasures pall and enjoyments are choked in ashes, but duties well performed 'as in the Great Taskmaster's eye' become imbedded in our consciousness as traits that nothing can efface and over which not even death itself can presume to claim a victory.

If it were given to us to read the scroll of human life clear and plain as its Maker meant it, life would have lost half its zest, and all its strength and strenuousness born of our constant striving to live well and live wisely, that makes it worth living. That "Man never is but often hopes to be" constitutes the salt of life and its very flavour and fragrance. The Mystery of life and death and their apparent injustice and contradiction become reconciled by faith in Providence and His righteous will. Death chastens, death softens, death humanizes and makes us all members of one another as no other experience has the power to do. In a life well lived the consciousness of death imparts a feeling of an ever present will that regulates and energizes all endeavours and reconciles man to triumphs and defeats as equally welcome ministrations. Life becomes poised, placid, elevated and merged into the Higher Will. The man so centred becomes a power for working out the purpose of God.

It is death more than life that enforces the lesson of humility, meekness and the evanescence of worldly pleasures. Borne down by the shock of death man awakens to the life of the soul. He realizes that things that are unseen are more real than the things seen and that the life of man has to be arrayed in the jewels of the spirit. What shall it avail a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul. Is the soul worth bartering for all the treasures of the world? Is it not the purpose of human life something higher than the accumulation of gold or the attainment of power that we can never permanently utilize or wield? Death is the greatest ally of the moral life. Its suddenness or uncertainty no less than its tragedy enforce the lesson of the need for loveliness and silence, for renunciation and reverence, for self-knowledge and self-control. If life were one joyous song free from sorrow, turmoil, struggle and failure, there would be nothing to realize, nothing to sacrifice and

live for. Every one would be self-centred and the bond of human sympathy would break under the weight of sordid pleasures on aimless inanities of social conventions. Thus death is the great ally of life in as much it reveals the solemnity, purpose and precious worth of the latter by bringing home to us its short duration, its precariousness and its evanescence. Death makes life full of purpose; death makes duty imperative; death unfolds life as a rare opportunity that ought not to be missed. Death binds men closer to one another and fosters the spirit of mutual aid, self-sacrifice and service. Death takes off all pride, makes us kneel and pray and surrender ourselves to our Creator in a spirit of resignation and perfect self-forgetfulness. Death teaches us to forget and forgive and meet as children of the same God and therefore brothers and sisters one and all. Let therefore those that mourn be calm and cheerful sustained by faith that all is well that comes from God.

Our wills are ours, we know not how,
Our wills are ours to make them thine.

No doubt we are shadows and we pursue shadows. But we are shadows that hail from Light. We are the children of Light. Let us not be scared by the dark shadow of Death because behind and before it is life eternal whose another name is love.

Man—a Calculating Creature

Man is said to be a calculating creature. He always takes a review of the past, casts the probabilities of the future and then fixes the limits and scope of his present operations. But this can be true only of the mortal part of man—his body, and not of his immortal part—the soul. How many hundreds and thousands of men are seen to be very strict and clever in their wordly calculations but quite forgetful and careless of the soul. For amassing money and securing bodily comforts they will move the heaven and the earth, but as regards their religious proceedings you see nothing but a complete blank. It certainly does not speak well of the calculating powers of man when he spends all the twenty-four hours of the day in plans and operations connected with the comforts of the perishable body, while not even so much as a thought is spent on the

prospects of the imperishable soul. If men will only pause and think about the soul, if they will only seriously remember that the soul has an endless career to run after its separation from the body and that its happiness or misery in that endless career will depend entirely on the state in which it will enter on that career, what a change will at once take place in their proceedings? They will then think less of the body and more of the soul. They will then see the necessity of incessantly praying for and obtaining that Divine Grace which only can impart purity and tranquility to the soul and prepare it for the enjoyment of everlasting happiness.

The characteristics of a Saint

Nature reveals the presence and power of God. In the unswerving prevalence of law and order that is manifested in all the movements of Nature we have clear evidence of a mind that is continuously at work planning and designing. All order implies design and design without the presence of a designing mind is inconceivable. A great saint has said "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth forth His handiwork." Watching the sky on a clear night and observing those myriad twinkling hosts that stud the surface of the blue, who can have failed to discern the presence of a power that plans and arranges and designs?

But although Nature gives evidence of the power and the intelligence of God it cannot give us proof of His spiritual character and qualities. Nature is material, and we shall in vain search among natural objects for those qualities which belong essentially to the spirit. We shall seek in vain for any manifestation of truth, of mercy, of righteousness among the objects and phenomena of Nature. For that, we must go elsewhere. We must rise from the contemplation of Nature to the contemplation of man, because it is only in the human world that we find evidence of spirit. When from natural history we proceed to human history we discover that in all ages men have fought the battle of truth. In bearing witness to truth they sacrificed all that men hold dear. It is by the contemplation and study of such lives that we get some idea of the higher qualities of the Godhead.

Another thing we find on thus leaving behind the world of nature and entering the world of man, is a scale of values. Nature knows no such thing as value. To nature the diamond is not more valuable than a piece of stone. It is the mind of man that makes a difference between the two. It is when we go to the human realm, when we rise to the spiritual kingdom, that the idea of values and their appreciation—the recognition that certain things are more precious than others—arises. Then we are introduced to a hierarchy, to a scale in which the worth of things rises step by step.

Now what are the values that the human spirit recognises as supreme? One man is very rich, another man is very poor. Does our heart tell us that the rich man because he happens to have a vast amount of money is a better man than the poor man? No, the human spirit revolts against the exaltation of wealth as the standard of values. Similarly there is something in us which tells us that although learning is a precious thing, although it is a valuable possession, yet, there is something even higher than learning and that human worth must not be judged by the standard of learning either. But now we have a man whose life is pure, holy, devoted to noble aims. There we at once recognise the true mark of worth. In the presence of those qualities our heart leaps up and says: "Here is the authentic badge of worth, here is the true sign and symbol of excellence." Now we arrive at what the philosophers call 'value judgment'. The life of justice, of goodness, of truthfulness, of desire to serve others evoke such judgments and are at once approved of as worthy and excellent. These are just the characteristics that distinguish the saints. Sainthood does not consist in the presentation of a certain kind of appearance, nor in the repetition of certain words, nor in the mechanical performance of certain deeds. Sainthood is a quality of the heart, a disposition of the soul. Sanctity proceeds of the nurture of the soul upon the eternal spirit. A saint is he whose soul is nourished from the fountains of eternal truth, eternal righteousness and eternal love.

—N. G. W.

The Hope of Immortality

When we yearn to know if there be life after physical death, Science gives us some useful hints. In the first place, it clears away

a preliminary difficulty by showing how widely appearance and reality differ. Neither sun, nor moon nor planet really is where it is seen to be. Stars that have vanished from the heavens may yet be seen shining. There are countless creatures about us whose existence we do not suspect. We need not, therefore, be greatly troubled by the apparent certainty of death. Secondly Science proves that not a particle of matter or physical energy can perish. If absolute destruction is against the order of the universe on the physical side, can it be permitted in the moral world? It is a striking fact that though man seems to perish utterly with the extinction of physical life, death has ever been regarded as a mystery or a veil drawn over another world. In the legend of the Kathopanishad, Nachiketa prefers a solution of the mystery of death to the most coveted earthly gifts, and at the royal court of Northumbria, a sage, speaking of the human soul says :—

“From what world she came what woe or weal

On her departure waits, no tongue hath shown.”

It is a significant fact that humanity cannot rest content with the thought that there is an end of every thing with death. This cannot be accounted for by a hankering after life, which is perhaps strongest among those who are most wanting in culture and moral refinement and are least disposed to engage in inquiries about the destiny of man. The wish to live can neither explain man's seeking a solution of the mystery of death, nor can it account for the faith of men like Socrates or Jesus in immortality. What the seekers of God have to say on this great question may be fitly summed up in the words of the Shvetashvatara Upanishad: which when translated read :—“A Man who knows Him truly passes over death.” (Max Muller's translation). The power to believe that the soul is too sacred to perish can only be won by loyalty to our moral and spiritual aspirations. We cannot expect to be assured of another life unless we make the best possible use of our present life. “The surest means,” says Fichte, “of acquiring a conviction of a life after death is so to act in this life that we can venture to wish for another. He who has sacrificed so much for virtue that he longs for recompense in a future life, needs no proof of the reality of such a life—he does not *believe* in it—he *feels* it.” “I could hardly understand,”

says Tennyson "how any great imaginative man who has deeply loved, suffered, thought and wrought, can doubt of the soul's continued progress in the after-life." The aspirations of the human intellect create a presumption in favour of immortality. "Genius is a promontory stretching into the Infinite," says Victor Hugo. But the greatness that manifests itself in genius does not belong to genius alone. When we admire the master-pieces of art or literature, we in a way participate in the intellectual powers of those who have produced them. Mind cannot admire mind without inner affinity and kinship, and the greatness of the human mind lies most in this that in seeking after truth, it communes with, and is sustained by the Divine Mind. Not the prophets alone but the great thinkers, scientists and men of letters also, are inspired by God. There is nothing truer in Milton's utterances than his prayer for Divine aid in his greatest undertaking. We cannot command a flow of inspiration into us at our will. We can only try to be worthy of it by moral and intellectual discipline. We think best and know most when we are in the most receptive attitude. This communion of the human mind with the Divine cannot cease with the death of the body. The intellectual culture of man but begins here. Newton did not exaggerate when he said he was only gathering pebbles on the seashore. But the intellect of man with all its promise shrinks into insignificance by the side of the moral sense. The humility of Newton was a thing of far greater intrinsic value than his intellectual gifts. Milton, the man, is incomparably greater than Milton, the poet. Carlyle speaks of "The Infinite Nature of Duty." Duty indeed springs from an infinite source and is in its nature *unending*. The more we obey the more exacting does it become. In spite of the lack of moral sensibility which prevails so widely about us, we are compelled by the irresistible authority of conscience in ourselves to believe that it is bound to assert itself in the life of every human being. Hypocrisy itself is an acknowledgment of the power of the moral law, and by admiration as well as by shame men bear witness to the appeal which goodness makes to their hearts. In the agony of repentance we have an immediate proof of the fact that every individual is required to strive after perfection. There is a conceivable limit to a man's obligations to others. There is no conceivable limit to his obligations to himself. As Montesquieu says, "What we owe to others may be defined, but not what we owe to

ourselves." Self-sacrifice is ordained for us as a necessary discipline quite apart from our obligation to society. Self-denial is not a means to any earthly end. Goethe speaks of "the high meaning Renunciation, by which alone the first real entrance into life is conceivable." There is something in self-sacrifice which appeals to our inmost nature, and hence it invests even meaningless rites and obsolete creeds with sanctity. Renunciation being an essential condition of spiritual growth, sacrifices are exacted from us in the form of disappointments and bereavements to satisfy this deep need of our moral nature. This baptism of fire must be a preparation for rites of sacred joy to be made known hereafter. And then, the sacredness of sorrow for our departed dear ones has a great lesson to teach us. Love is perfected by suffering and it cannot have a nobler aspiration than that of being faithful beyond death. Buckle regards "the universality of the affections, the yearning of every man to care for something out of it-self," as "the safest and the most impregnable ground" of faith in immortality. Finally, the crowning evidence of immortality is the intimate nature of our relationship to God as revealed in spiritual experience. The peace and the joy with which we are sometimes blessed are authentic revelations of the Divine love. The very tides of the inner life are evidence of immortality. The best that we have known and felt we are bound to know and feel again. The glimpses and visions which have vanished after casting a transient light on our path must one day return to abide with us. We do not realize the meaning of worship until we have had a glimpse of a glory we would contemplate for ever. And the beauty of God is not revealed to us in order to disappoint for ever the hope of supreme joy it raises. Every man, says Emerson, parts from the contemplation of the universal and eternal beauty "with the feeling that it rather belongs to ages than to mortal life." And this is the experience that inspired the utterance of the ancient Hindu sage: "A man who knows Him truly passes over death".

—H. C. M.

Aids to Devotion

God of Mercy, God of love,
 Hear our sad repentant song,
 Sorrow dwells in every heart,
 Penitence on every tongue,
 Deep regret for follies past,
 Talents wasted, time mis-spent,
 Hearts debased by worldly cares,
 Thankless for the blessings lent ;
 Foolish fears and fond desires,
 Vain regrets for things as vain ;
 Lips too seldom to praise,
 Oft to murmur and complain ;
 These and every secret fault,
 Filled with grief and shame we own ;
 Humbled at Thy feet we bow,
 Seeking help from Thee alone.
 God of Mercy, God of love,
 Hear our sad, repentant song :
 O restore our wandering hearts ;
 Thou to whom all grace belongs !

Right Thinking

If the importance of right thinking is so manifest even now when the whole civilised world is staggering under the most cruel and the most wanton of wars, that importance will be more and more realised as the years go on. There are countless signs to indicate the direction of the road which we are travelling. Take this one fact instead of many, that now, in the direct crisis of her destiny the welfare of England is mainly in the hands of two men, of whom one began life as a small Welsh attorney and the other as a soldier in the ranks. Do you suppose that these men reached their present eminence by luck or by shouting with the largest crowd ? Nay, I am sure they reached it by their own independent power of thought.



Pandit Shivnath Shastri.

Pandit Shivnath Shastri

allied with those virtues of industry and character without which the most brilliant intellect can never get fair play. These considerations, at which I do but glance, must be familiar to you all. Surely, they should hearten you, to be, as we say in English, your own men, to think out your own opinions and beliefs, to examine the meaning of phrases and of words, to decline to accept the authority of the crowd or the bazaar to dictate to you the character of your minds. Under God and His equal heavens, stand on your own legs, and pin your faith to your own powers of thinking and working : so shall your work be one with the falling rain and the growing corn, and the stars in their courses shall fight for you. Let the bazaar do its own shouting—fulsome eulogy to-day, foul abuse to-morrow—both ignorant, both indiscriminating, both false. What does it all matter to men who realise how short is the time within which they have the power to advance the cause of truth and humanity on this planet? I do believe that over no body of men do these finer motives, these nobler impulses exercise a more potent sway than over you. I ask you not to forget them in the noise and clamour and hurry of the days in which we live. Let me impress upon you, that I stand before you now merely as an advocate of the theme which I have made my text. I have no doctrine to preach to you, no opinions to enforce, no beliefs to inculcate. This only I urge, that you think for yourselves. There are, of course, discouragements to be faced. The great bulk of humanity is well content to drift with the tide, to follow the opinions of those who for the moment happen to be most numerous or most noisy. These people look askance at independent thinking and we can hardly expect it to be otherwise. —*Sir Stanley Batchelor.*

Pandit Sivanath Sastri

(1847—1919)

He was one of the founders, and for nearly forty years the leading Missionary and minister, of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. A man of many-sided character and manifold activities, a leader in whom towering intellectual gifts were united with absolute sincerity of purpose, great self-sacrifice and an unwavering faithfulness to exalted ideals, he had a hand in shaping the progressive movements, and moulding the character of the youth, of two generations in Bengal.

A strong and tenacious will and a sturdy loyalty to conviction were traits he inherited from his father, and a tender heart and an intense longing for religion from his mother. In his youth, while yet a student at Calcutta, he was drawn towards the religion and the social ideals of the Brahmo Samaj, in consequence of which, he had to endure fierce opposition and even bitter persecution from his strong willed father, and the tears and entreaties of his tender-hearted mother. In 1869, three years before completing his brilliant University career, he publicly joined the Brahmo Samaj on the memorable 22nd of August, on which date Keshub Chunder Sen initiated into the Brahmic faith a number of Bengal's brightest young men. Sivanath's religious enthusiasm impelled him, almost immediately after his initiation, to think, write, and work for the Brahmo Samaj. When the time came for the establishment of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj in 1878, he threw himself heart and soul into the movement, and gave up forth-with the Government post with high future prospects, which he was then holding, in order to be free to serve it as its missionary. Since its foundation, his life, his thoughts, and his ideals have occupied so conspicuous a place in all that it has, under providence, been able to achieve, and have entered so deeply into its inner life, that they may fitly be described as the leaven that has leavened the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj.

He had a hand in founding or organising several of the most important institutions of the Samaj. He was associated with Ananda Mohan Bose in drawing up the constitution of the newly founded Samaj, and in establishing the City School (now the City College and School) and the Students' Weekly Service. He worked vigorously for Samaj organs, being the first editor of the *Tattvakaumudi*, and a regular contributor to the *Brahmo Public Opinion*, and subsequently to the *Indian Messenger*, which he helped to bring out. He was the foremost among the founders of the Brahmo Girls' School at Calcutta, and of the Rammohun Roy Seminary at Patna. With a view to provide a centre of spiritual activity and influence, and a home for the training of the mission-workers for the Brahmo Samaj, the want of which he was feeling very keenly, he established the Sadhan Asram, and continued to be its life and soul so long as he was capable of doing any work.

As a missionary, he carried the message of the Brahmo Samaj to the farthest corners of India. As a Minister, he by his inspiring eloquence, his noble thought, his wealth of spiritual experience bearing constant testimony to the joy of worship and to the power of prayer, or repentance, and of self-surrender, and, above all, by his intense and magnetic earnestness, had the chief share among his contemporaries in the building up of the spiritual life of the Brahmo Samaj. The sermons delivered by him and the hymns and *Kirtans* composed by him stirred and lifted thousands of hearts with the power of the Spirit. Often he spoke with such compelling earnestness on the duty of repentance and self-surrender to God, as to soften the hardest hearts and make them burst into sobs and wailings.

He had in an abundant measure the genuine charity and sympathy which seeks to help and raise the lowly. His home was ever a refuge to the outcast and the homeless. He constantly sought out the poor and the distressed, and though he passed his days under the perpetual stress of self inflicted poverty, he joyously shared his meagre substance with them.

He was a strenuous worker in the cause of temperance and social reform. He was a most ardent and devoted advocate of woman's rights, and he always strove to win for her the place of co-worker with man in every sphere of useful activity.

He was one of the founders of the Indian Association. Ever in ardent sympathy with the political aspirations of his countrymen, on several occasions he came forward to address large meetings on questions that agitated the public mind.

He was a master of Bengali prose and a poet of no mean order. The same moral and spiritual earnestness which marked his life marked his writings, and as a man of letters his aim ever was to

“Arouse the sensual from their sleep
Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain
To noble raptures.”

Behind all his influence and his achievements lay something in the Man himself which defies analysis and which drew towards him the spontaneous love of all with whom he came in contact. Sir

Narayan Chandavarkar sought to define the subtle charm of his personality as a happy blend of hearty sympathy with man and the buoyancy of hope and faith. Rabindra Nath Tagore sought to explain it by saying that Sivanath's "devotion to God.....was not an expression of intellect or moral enthusiasm, but of the entire man. Being gifted with sympathetic imagination and abundance of humour, his mind had its full breadth of humanity, which ever saved him from the harsh intolerance and code-bound frigidity of the moral tyrant. ... With Sivanath, religion was the fulfilment of his complete life."

—S. C. C.

Religion a Vital Force

That there are many problems of large proportions for organised religion to solve, is obvious ; that many of the forms whereby religion in the past has sought to express itself have already been or soon will be swept away, is equally certain. None of these, however, affect the perpetuity of fundamental religion. Personal experience, as well as the testimony of history, ought to convince us that religion, in the higher sense, is absolutely indestructible. When a learned Frenchman said that humanity is "incurably religious," he said more than he meant ; for this was, of course, a sneer or a lament beyond which religion was thought of as a diseased state of experience. Call it disease, defect ; describe it as superstition, or what you will ; yet the fact remains that it is in human nature and there to stay.

We have only to question our own hearts to know this truth. If we were to eliminate from experience every element of direct fundamental religion ; if the problems of Nature, Life, Destiny, God, could possibly drop out of sight, out of thought, and there were left only the two great universal facts, Love and Death, the consciousness of mankind would evolve and reconstruct from these two elements an infinite variety of religious wants and beliefs. If religion had been destructible, it would certainly need no European War to kill it ; it would have been dead long ago. Even though its scoffers had ignored it, lifted no hand or raised no voice against it, its own friends would have destroyed it by their own malpractice. If religion had no divine origin, if it were not an essential part of our nature, had it not a powerful hold on the consciousness

of the human race, outraged humanity would long ago have destroyed it, and cast it root and branch into the outer darkness, in consequence of the cruel superstitions, the horrible practice, the despotic and corrupt priest-hoods, the outrageous bigotries, the false and heartless creeds, the persecutions, the inquisitions, the bloody wars which have been waged in its name and cursed its history in the world. Yet in spite of all these evils and crimes, religion has gone on growing and ripening in the soul of man, and remains even to this hour the most powerful moulding force in human life.

Let us take courage, then and not allow ourselves to grow despondent with temporary checks and transient conditions. Religion is immutable, indestructible, eternal. Neither its false friends nor its outspoken enemies can permanently impede its progress or completely circumscribe its influence. In the midst of the ebb and flow of modern life, thought, and methods, listening to the tempests of criticism, swept onward by tides of life whose sweep and reach are too vast for us to measure their diameter, or foresee the shores on which they break, they whose religious faith remains firm can be serene in a great certainty.

Religion is not a thing of yesterday, to-day, or to-morrow. It is bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, spirit of our spirit. Whatever outward changes may yet come, religion itself will for ever abide in human hearts. To kill it, the human world must destroy itself. Being the expression of an eternal relationship between man and his Maker, it must continue until one or both of them cease to exist. Neither is thinkable. God lives; and though heaven and earth pass away, though they be rolled up as a scroll, or go up in flame and smoke, or disappear in the chilling death of a slowly freezing sphere—man, too, will outlive the catastrophe, and religion will still be the sap and blood and rejuvenating power of his unfolding life.

The Greatness of Man

A man's greatness lies not in wealth and station, as the vulgar believe, nor yet in the intellectual capacity, which is often associated with the meanest moral character, the most object servility to those in high places, and arrogance to the lowly; but a man's true greatness lies in the consciousness of an honest purpose in life and a

steady obedience to the rule which he knows to be right, without troubling himself about what others may think or say.

Praise and Prayer

The code of our worship, and all true religious worship, may be expressed by two words, Praise and Prayer. There are of course other things in worship. There is exhortation, there is confession, there is hymnology. There are these other elements undoubtedly. But these are merely subordinate to the two essential things—praise and prayer. There is no praise without prayer, and there is no prayer without praise. Why should we praise? Is the praise of God a proper thing, or is it a mere superfluity? You sometimes hear people say that praise is so much waste of energy. God, they say, does not want praise. God is not like any human being that He will be flattered by your praise. Express praise is essential to the life of goodness, and the life of virtue. Perhaps it will seem an excessive claim to make. But do we not feel that unless we express in language the things that we feel dimly, those things do not assume any reality? There is many a thought that wanders in our minds in inarticulate fashion, but it is when that thought is given form in words, that the thought assumes a certain reality, a certain volume, a certain mass. It is the same with regard to praise. We all vaguely feel the grandeur, the love, the perfect purity of God, but in order to make these things real to us, in order that these may not be merely passing things, indistinct things, it is necessary to express them in words. Praise is founded upon the principle of admiration. For unless we admire, unless we reverence, praise is a mere mockery. In seeking to praise God we are bearing testimony to the essential thought and idea that man lives by praise. No one whose heart has not been touched by the beauty of holiness, no one to whom perfection has not become a yearning, a goal to be striven for with his whole might and strength, no such man can realize the love for which we are meant, the love of the children of God, the love of Him who is perfect and who has put in our hearts the yearning to be perfect even as He is perfect. So when we praise, we are giving expression to that capacity for admiration, to that faculty which is a purifying element of life. Stop praise, stop expressing about

the perfection of God, you find that your religious life will become increasingly dim, and in course of time, it will be a vague sentiment with no endurance, with no power, with no stimulus about it. All religious communities, with very few exceptions, have felt that human language is well and wisely employed in setting forth praise of God, not irreverently, not in flourishes of rhetoric, but in words of deep humility, in words which remind us that it is the finite seeking to set forth the infinite.

Now about prayer. It is said that if God is willing to do for us the utmost that is good for us, the utmost that we need, then where is the necessity of prayer, where is the necessity of our asking Him to do that which not only He is willing to do, but which He is sure to do. That is an argument which is frequently brought forth in depreciation of prayer. The spiritual world is a world of freedom, the law of the spirit is freedom, and freedom implies choice for its realization. Is it not reasonable to suppose that no blessings can be bestowed upon us by God unless we choose them in the sphere of the things spiritual? If His blessings were conferred upon us irrespective of our choice of them, these would not be large blessings at all. What would be the value of righteousness for which our hearts do not yearn, but which we are forced by necessity to follow out? In prayer we are choosing, we are deciding, we are determining to ourselves what are the things that we should desire, what are the things for which we should go to the Supreme Soul. It is when the spirit realizes its own desire for the things of the spirit, it is only then that spiritual blessings come to be attained. No blessing can be a reality in the spiritual world unless the soul antecedently desires for it. No blessing can have any spiritual grace unless the spirit feels its need and seeks it. There must be seeking, there must be the desire before the blessing can bear spiritual fruit. Shall our prayers be answered? Some people seem to throw great doubt on this. They say there is no possibility of anything more or less being granted than God has fixed. If we realize that the spiritual world is essentially free, that the commerce of spirit is commerce between free spirits, there is no need to hold that things are shut in this kind of necessity. All our human intercourse is founded upon asking and giving. In this interchange of desire and response there is nothing that militates against the law

of justice and holiness. In the intercourse of spirits there is abundant room for asking and granting, without any of the spiritual laws being violated. What is there against our believing that the Divine Will is free, and that the Divine Will is ready to answer our requisitions, so long as they are not opposed to that Will, and surely it does not require much explanation to prove that many of our wishes are just such as the heavenly Father will approve of. Let us not be carried away by the pessimistic doctrine that the laws of God are fixed, that in the Divine perfection there is no room for abundant giving. Only let us desire and ask sincerely according to the intuitions of our spirit for the best things, for the highest things, and we may be sure that He who hears and grants, that He whose world is essentially a world of freedom, has abundant means of fulfilling the yearnings of our heart without violating any of the spiritual laws. —N. G. W.

Delusion

A young man who thinks he can lead a reckless and profligate existence until he reaches the middle term of life, and then repent and make a good steady citizen is deluded. He thinks that people are fools, destitute of memory. He concludes that if he repents, everybody will forget that he was a dissipated fellow. This is not the case. People are apt to remember the bad deeds and forget the good ones. Besides it is no easy thing to break off in middle life bad habits that have been formed in youth.

Work and Worship

"It is a mistake to suppose that in order to worship God one must retire from the affairs of the world, either into the solitude of a jungle or into a cell of a monastery. Even the best minds are, at times, liable to make this mistake. Most of you, I hope, have read that gem of a book—the autobiography of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore. If you have read it, you will recall to your mind a scene from that book, in which, Maharshi Devendranath gives us a glimpse into the innermost recesses of his heart. Devendranath was,

one evening watching the sun going down the top of the Himalayas to the world below. It was one of those scenes, in which, we, ordinary mortals, would have seen nothing to rouse our conscience. But Devendranath was not an ordinary mortal. He was a true and a devout worshipper of God. And how did the scene strike him? In it he heard the voice of God saying to him, "Lo! Here am I going to the world below, to do my work there. Go thou likewise into the world of men and do thy work there." The story of the two sisters—Martha and Mary—in the New Testament teaches us the same moral. I remember, being present, some years ago, at the family prayers of a devout and pious member of the Brahmo Samaj. When the family had assembled for prayer, he noticed that a lady of the family was not there. On inquiring the reason of her absence, he was told that she was unable to join in the family prayers as she had certain household duties to perform. "Do not disturb her" said my friend, "she is at work, that is, at worship." You will see from this that work and worship cannot be divided into two water-tight compartments. You cannot say that "I will work for so many hours of the day; I will amuse myself for so many hours of the day and I will devote only a portion of my time to worship." Life is a battle. It is a perpetual struggle between right and wrong. And it is in the workshop, in the office, in the lawyer's study, that we are often called upon to battle with temptations and to overcome them. And if we did not make it a habit to carry into these places, the spirit of worship, in the hour of trial, we may not find strength enough to overcome the temptations, with which we are liable to be assailed there. One may make light of this spirit of worship which should be one's companion, every moment of one's life, when life to him is all sunshine. But it is when our life's horizon is darkened by clouds of trouble, whether in the shape of loss of fortune or position of friends or of relations it is when friends desert us and relations fail to give us the help we expected from them, it is when the sympathy of man fails to carry to our hearts the consolation which we sorely need and to our minds the peace for which we are vainly panting, it is when face to face with these trials, that the spirit of worship comes to our help and prayer gives us the peace and the strength, which man had failed to give us. I have passed through many a harassing day in my life. And had it not been for the peace and the strength, which prayer, never failed to give me, life for me,

would surely have assumed a different aspect from what it does now. In years immediately preceding the great war, which has just come to a close, even some of the best minds in Europe and America had become sceptical as to the power of religion to influence the destiny of humanity. And the greatest service which President Wilson has done to humanity is to teach it the great truth that where religion has been expelled from the service of humanity there its place has always been taken by the brute force, in all its savage nakedness. The difference between the two is quite obvious. The brute force says to the weaker man, "I have the power to kill you and therefore I have the right." But says religion, "No. You may have the power to kill me, but you have not the right." You will thus see that the function of religion is to hold the brute in man in subjection by appealing to and rousing the divine in him. And no one can acquire this frame of mind who does not every moment of his life, work, as if in the Great Taskmaster's eye. I would therefore ask you to cultivate goodness, and by goodness, I mean, godliness. Do not only *seem* good ; but *be* good. "Do nothing in private of which you may have reason to be ashamed in public." —H. C. M.

Seek Light from Without

We all acknowledge the imperfections of human nature. In our frank moments, we will make no secret of our defects to our friends ; yet, if we are charged with some frailty in any specific instance, we stoutly resent it. And the resentment may be honest. "Know thyself" is a maxim inculcated on all sides. Earnest minds resolutely set themselves to the task. Yet it is not often that they come out successful. The bias of self is too strong. Try as hard as we may, it is difficult to persuade ourselves that we have been in the wrong in any specific instance. The stand-point from which we viewed our action in the doing, cannot be changed. The obliquity of our deed is hidden from our sight. Do you expect to see a black mark on your face by inward meditation, without the help of a mirror ? If not, how can you hope to see the moral quality of your action by your own efforts alone ? Will you resent a neighbour telling you that there is a stain on your face ? If not how can you honestly reject with scorn the word of your right-minded neighbour holding up to

you the true quality of your action? As in the case of your physical self, so in the moral, your unaided efforts to see your blemishes will not always succeed. You must admit aid from without. Never hesitate to use the mirror provided for you in the speeches of your neighbours. You should know yourself, indeed, but you ought to seek the light chiefly from without.

Sanctification

Everybody understands what is meant by the term to be sanctified of God. It means, apart from the innumerable associations that have clustered round the phrase as the result of the vicissitudes of church discipline and formalism, to be deemed holy in the eye of God so as to deserve His blessing. Sanctification comes of dedication and the spirit of self-denial carried through all the little and great acts of life. To the average man and woman—and religion is the staff of life more to the average being than to the extraordinary,—say the saint and the down-right sinner,—calls for great deeds come very rarely. Life to him or her is a life of drudgery and toilsome duties relieved only by the amenities of the home and the small circle of friends and relatives among whom he mingles freely and without a pose. In proportion as they pour the spirit of self-denial in their intercourse with these, does their life become sanctified and blessed of God.

But this self-denial does not and ought not to mean the negation of self altogether. Religion rightly understood must make a man free to realize himself, to bring out his individuality and make it serviceable in this world. Sanctification cannot and does not come through reducing our personality to a zero-point—the much misunderstood gospel of Nirvana. It means developing in ourselves the nerve to reject many things that do not really matter so that we can concentrate ourselves better on things that do matter most to us as human beings and children of God. Religion does not mean the crushing out of one's personality. It only means the careful winnowing out of the chaff from the grain of life.

Holiness, purity, true saintliness mean a thoroughly healthy, sane and intense life. God lives and works intensely though with

perfect spontaneity and the least self-consciousness, if at all we are permitted to describe the Indescribable in the terms of human affairs. Does God abandon the world? Does He ever cease revealing and manifesting Himself? Is not perfection the mark of one whose life flowers forth eternally. Like a copious spring, the life flows broader, purer, vaster, nobler, shedding blessing, sunshine and joy, all around. Work without haste, without worry, continuous, absorbing and yet leaving room enough for individual emphasis and growth, that is the attribute of God. The Holy of Holies, and that must also be the motto of us, who would be sanctified of God. Sanctification therefore must be for us another name for intensification. As a writer has pointed out, "It means resolutely turning aside from the thousand worldly things that split up the soul and make it superficial; from the unproductive passions that burn it up leaving it dry and empty; from the pleasures or pains that make it narrow or weak. Only in this way can we extract from ourselves the highest value of which we are capable in our own degree and our own kind. And to make of one's self an ever greater life-value—this alone is, in the essential meaning of the word, to live." To be sanctified of God, then is to make of oneself an ever greater life-value, by developing the will, intellect, and moral fervour to a pitch that will make the treasures of the spirit, entirely attractive and loveable things in our eyes. And we may be thereby embracing them as naturally as the child embraces its mother.

Prayer (10)

Prayer is an essential part of devotion. A regular habit of prayer is as much necessary for the development of a religious character, as regular diet is for the healthy growth of the body. But to suppose that the person who acquires the habit of closeting himself and saying his prayers at appointed times, does all that is requisite for becoming thoroughly religious or making his prayers acceptable to God, is a mistake. He to whom the prayer is addressed, is not to be charmed by sweet utterances and musical sounds. He knows the heart of the addresser and what does not proceed from that heart, cannot reach Him. In order that the prayer should be efficacious, it must be the outpouring of the heart

and its essence must enter into the very life and spirit of him who prays. It must not only be said at appointed times and in set words, but every moment of his life, the religious man must feel the existence of God in him and in every thing around him and must speak to Him either to praise and thank Him for his bounties, to implore His counsel and assistance in time of confusion and difficulties or to ask His forgiveness of our sins and His guidance and light in the intricate paths of this world. It is only when a man is continuously and forever prayerful that he never forgets his duty towards his fellow-creatures or forsakes truth and righteousness for any consideration. Though living in this world and in the midst of the worldly concerns, he is always with God, directly under His guidance and influence and enjoying the unspeakable satisfaction that all his thoughts, words and actions are approved by Him who is forever enthroned in his heart.

The Ministry of Sorrow

Can there be any compensation for what we lose? And is such a compensation of any avail? Can a man console himself with the thought of the "far-off interest of tears"? A man has lost his friend; another has lost his nearest of kith and kin; a woman is widowed and children are orphaned. Whatever is there in this world that can compensate for these heavy crosses?

Such thoughts pass through the mind, such feelings overwhelm and not unoften crush the heart when a man's shock of grief is very recent. He doubts the Universe and its laws. He has serious misgivings about the ordered scheme of things. He can hardly reconcile himself to the existence of good, justice and righteousness in a world so palpably full of darkness, evil, hardship and agonizing disparity and grief. Under this stunning blow, a man had better be left to himself to recover his poise. It is fruitless, nay at times it proves even cruel, to try and console. Time alone heals and reconciles. God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb. And out of this healing process, if a man has sterling qualities, they sprout forth.

It is sorrow that deepens character. It is sorrow that steadies a man in the path of virtue and faith. It is sorrow that makes a man more attentive to the survivors. The hardships and difficulties, that

a personal loss of life or money involves, bring out the best in men. All bloated artificiality disappears. Humanity divides itself into sheep and goats not by the accidents of wealth and poverty, but by the qualities manifested by man in bearing up against the shock of grief or bereavement. Does it degenerate or regenerate him? Nothing tries a man more truly than this test, this fiery ordeal of sorrow, this forlornness of spirit.

Nature rains terrible blows upon a tree that it would fashion into the giant of the forest. A tree in a china vase may be very beautiful to look at. But of what use is it? Instead of affording shelter to others, it has to be protected itself against storm, wind and rain. Man's glory and privilege is in struggle, and in the uplift born of that struggle. We are not in this world to be exhibits in the show-cases of a museum. We are here for full mental, moral and spiritual growth. Evil and sorrow are in this world that we may be thoroughly sifted, tried through and through, and tempered like fine steel for the work of God. For that we must be first disillusioned as to things that are real and those that are unreal. Then alone does perfection become our watchword.

No man is worth any thing that has not had his hours of the deepest and the most heartsearching anxiety, sorrow and suffering. Tribulation winnows in us the chaff from the grain. Emerson has uttered some penetrating words on the compensation of calamity. And with them we close this brief excursus on the ministry of sorrow. "We are all idolaters of the old. We do not believe in the riches of the soul, in its proper eternity and omnipresence. We do not believe there is any force in to-day to rival or recreate the beautiful yesterday. We linger in the ruins of the old tent where once we had bread and shelter and organs, nor believe that the spirit can feed, cover and nerve us again. But we sit and weep in vain. *The voice of the Almighty saith "Up and onward for evermore."*

Cheer up, oh friend, that art weighted with the burden of sorrow. "Up and onward forevermore."

Pray

Child of God, pray on. By prayer thy hand can touch the stars, thy arm stretch up to heaven. Nor let thy holy boldness be dashed

by the thought that prayer has no power to bend these skies and bring down thy God. When I pull on the rope which fastens my frail and little boat to a distant and mighty ship, my poor strength may not draw its vast bulk to me, but I draw myself to it. And it equally serves my purpose, and supplies my needs, that prayer, although it were powerless to move God to me, moves me to God. If He does not descend to earth, I ascend to heaven. —*Dr. Guthrie.*

Repentance Purifies

Merciful God has attached suffering to sin so that men may not perish by gradually sinking in sin. Just as physical pain ensues as soon as there is some disease in the body, so as soon as sin overtakes the soul, its joy and peace depart and is torn asunder by remorse and disquiet. Such is the punishment for sinful actions. Men repent on receiving such internal punishment and become eager to walk in the path of righteousness having turned away from sin. God punishes the sinner so as to awaken the consciousness, by which he can realise his deranged condition. As soon as the consciousness (of sin) is awakened by punishment, repentance arises; God forgives past sin on the awakening of repentance, as thereby the object of punishment is fulfilled. If a man betakes himself to righteous path without committing further sins, peace and purity are poured again in his soul. Repentance and resort to righteous path after turning away from sin, are the two elements of penance. Repentance arises according to divine law, the other element is to be carefully instituted by man himself. Always examine yourself carefully, and turn away from sin. Make amends for the mischief done by sin, with righteous actions.

Solitude (3)

“Let us cultivate meditation and love solitude. Then alone will God be firmly enthroned in our hearts and we shall lose the narrowing sense of mine and thine. It is only when we are alone with ourselves that we discover our God and learn to love Him. It is only thus that we realise fully that He is in us and we are in Him. It is not in the market-place that we shall find Him or

appropriate Him truly. Such a meditative spirit alone reaches the rank of a seer and elder to other human beings." —*Ramdas.*

Beautify thy Soul

Beautiful is the rising morn, beautiful the setting sun. There is beauty in earth and sky, in land and water, in the green foliage of trees and the varied colours of flowers in Nature and in art. There is beauty of sound and smell, of colour and shape, of form and figure, of thought and action, of feelings and sentiments. Beauty is onmnipresent and all pervasive. What is this beauty ?

Beauty expresses itself in material form but is itself not matter. Nor is it a quality of matter like size or weight. Take a stone, break it into fragments, each of these will assume some size as well as carry weight. The difference will be one of degree, not of quality. But take a flower, cut it into its components. Each of these may possess beauty of its own. But the beauty of the flower has ceased to exist. Nor is beauty like colour, a quality added to one material substance with the help of another. Nay, beauty is not material, it is essentially spiritual.

Beauty needs one spirit to create and another to appreciate. The Supreme Spirit creates a universe abounding in beauty at all points and urges man to discover how beautiful is the home in which he has been placed. Yet it is not given to all men singly or collectively to find all the beauty that there is in the universe any more than they have power to grasp everything that there is to know therein. A few gifted souls in moments of inspiration alight on new regions of beauty not noticed before and all the world blesses them for the new eyes and ears they have brought to it. Even in ordinary cases, he sees most who brings most sympathy to his aid. A child is the idol of its mother. Does she perceive real beauty or a mere illusion, the creation of her love ? Perhaps an instance will help to a correct solution of the question. You have, no doubt, within your experience, met with a person whose first sight repelled. But chance threw him often in your way. You had frequent opportunities of knowing him and penetrating to the very soul within. When you are able to do that, the person no longer remains the same whom you first saw. The beautiful soul within him, you find expressed in his

face which has now acquired a beauty not perceived before. So in all cases, if you happen to possess the gift and the patience, and do not mind taking the necessary pains and bestowing the required attention, if you try in all humility of heart, to find the soul within what you see or hear or touch, you will discover that the object of your contemplation possesses a beauty of which you had no idea before. For all beauty is the beauty of the soul immanent in matter which can only speak to a brother soul in search of it.

Man not only perceives beauty but creates it too. That is one index of his high destiny. If he was so made as to feel beauty and nothing more he would only know his duty to consist in a whole hearted enjoyment of and deep gratitude for all the beautiful objects which his loving Father had provided to cheer his passage through life. But to be able to create is a power to which a duty is annexed. All power is coupled with an obligation. Beauty is the reflection of the soul. The artist ever discloses himself in his art. The nobler the soul the nobler the production. And that production is the source of joy to the artist and to others. If you paint a picture or compose a piece of music you create a joy for yourself and for others. But high class painting and music may be caviare to the general public. One creation however there is and that the noblest of all in which every soul around you may find its joy and that is a beautiful soul, a soul which is all love and sweetness. Beautify then your soul, beautify your life, beautify your thoughts and your deeds. That is your duty as well as your privilege. Even so may you enter into the joy of your Lord.

The Quest of God

1. He is no scholar whose mind is not true to God.
2. Do you see what I see? He the Lord has become everything.
3. Earnestness is the only thing necessary. Long must you struggle in the water before you learn to swim.
4. In the pure is reflected the Lord as the sun is in clear mirror.

5. God shines when ego dies.
6. Like unto a miser that longs for gold, let thy heart long for God.
7. Call on the Divine Mother. She will come to you and take you to her arms. —*Ramkrishna Paramahansa.*

Fear

“Lead me out of darkness into light.” is part of a prayer which we address to the Almighty every week from our pulpit. What is this darkness from which relief is sought by means of prayer? The darkness to which the prayer refers has many phases. We wish to deal with one of them this time. Darkness means ignorance. It proceeds from many causes. But it mostly results from lack of adequate knowledge of physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual laws which govern the relations of man to man, and of the man to the universe.

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God is love. We call ourselves His children. Our faith, therefore, should teach us to fear no evil, because in the words of Tukaram “wheresoever I go, Thou art my companion.” His love envelopes us on all sides, screens us from all dangers and guides our halting steps along the path of duty and righteousness. Fearlessness therefore, should be the distinguishing trait of the man who has realized within himself, even in a very small measure, the perfect love of God, because it casteth away all fear.

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But how few of us are really free from fear of one kind or another? Why is it so? Because our knowledge of the ways of Providence is limited and our faith in God, Who is our father and Whose children we are, is weak. Hence the prayer for leading us from darkness into light.

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Fear is the child of ignorance, that is, of darkness. But it is the parent of many a crime and folly that has disgraced humanity. Let us, however, bear in mind that fear is not entirely unwholesome.

For a certain kind of fear there is a legitimate place in the economy of human life. On the physical side man is always afraid of Death, that is, of the want of those things, or abuse of those things which lead to death. Therefore, the fear of the lack of food, or of disease, or of accident is a wholesome fear, because it teaches man many a lesson in patience, perseverance, frugality, moderation, cleanliness and carefulness. But the fear ceases to be wholesome and becomes positively harmful when we allow it to develop into excessive dread of what may happen to our bodies or our property, and allow it to interfere with our duties towards one another as children of God and as members of society. It is against this fear a man who wants to lead a truly religious life ought to guard himself. Why?

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Because this fear is the child of selfishness. Once we allow it to get mastery over us it may lead us to any act of meanness. For fear of losing one's job one may be tempted to act, nay, may even act with calculated meanness towards a fellow-labourer in the same office. For fear of losing one's wealth, one may be often tempted, nay, is often tempted to deal dishonestly with those with whom one has business relations. It leads to frauds. It is the cause of many a fraudulent contract and is at the root of many a fraudulent sale and purchase. It is this fear of losing wealth or position which leads a man to do a mean thing in his self-defence. This is the base kind of fear and should never find a place in the heart of a truly religious man.

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Another kind of fear which is the parent of lies is the fear of man. It makes a man a liar and a hypocrite. "Mr. So-and-So is a very big man or a very rich man. If I were to tell him what I sincerely feel and think about certain of his actions he may be offended with me and I may lose the many good things which I owe to his favour." Thus reasons the man who is afraid of speaking the truth for fear of losing some big man's favour. What is the result? The man becomes a hypocrite or a dissembler and in order not to lose the favour of the big man loses his own soul.

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Let us take another instance, that of a political leader. We will suppose that the leader is a member of a particular party. It

may now and then happen that he may find himself holding an opinion either different from or opposed to the opinion of his party. What is he to do in such circumstances? If he is afraid of losing votes or of losing his influence with his party he may play the hypocrite and say and do things which his conscience and reason do not approve. How can a politician who is afraid of offending his followers give them the right lead in the hour of trial? How can a coward be a guide to any one? This fear of man which prevents one from speaking out one's mind truthfully is another base kind of fear from which a religious man, be his profession in life what it may, ought to be ever free.

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This fear of which we have spoken above is the result of man's want of faith in God. If one really believed that God was love and that He always watched over the well-being of His children, man would never be afraid of man, or of loss of wealth, or of position, because in the words of Tukaram "wheresoever I go, Thou art my companion." This faith when it becomes a reasoned conviction with a man, frees him from all base fears, because although he knows that Life is a mystery, he is satisfied from his own experience that behind it there is the love of God ever guiding the erring steps of his child—the man who is groping his way onwards from darkness into light. It is darkness, that is, ignorance of God's ways that makes a man's faith in Him weak. But with the departure of darkness man realizes with enlightened faith the love of God which casteth away fear and he says to himself when placed in circumstances that try his courage:—

"Yet in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood
To one fixed trust my spirit clings;
I know that God is good."

—N. G. C.

The Reformer's Faith

"Others, I doubt not, if not we,
The issue of our toils shall see ;
And (they forgotten and unknown)
Young children gather as their own
The harvest that the dead had sown."

Action always proceeds from feeling and in all great movements, the important question is how to kindle the necessary feeling which will carry them through. Great men gifted with strong emotional organization and capable of impressing themselves on their contemporaries easily arouse, what they themselves possess, the passion and the enthusiasm which effect the reform they strive for. But such men are not to be had for the asking. Nor do they always throw their energies into a particular cause, unless that cause expresses the feeling and the need of the time. Great men are as much the creatures of their times as they are their leaders and guides. Their advent is generally preceded by a time of preparation in which the evils they are to reform, have raised dissatisfaction in the minds of the people and created a desire however vague and inarticulate, for their removal. Nay, at times, circumstances themselves make the great men they need. Nor is it possible to say with any degree of confidence that those whom the world now recognizes as its great men would all have established their title to that name as certainly or at least in their particular spheres, if their lot had been cast in other times and under different circumstances. On the other hand, it is common experience that even ordinary men achieve great results under pressure of excitement and passion. Hence it sounds like cold-blooded hypocrisy in the mouth of one who admits the necessity of reform to say that without the presence of such people in the land, reform has no chance. For in all matters of conduct, to know the right is to receive a trust to carry it out. If it is good to reform society, it is the duty of every body who knows it, to do his best to achieve the reform. It is the nature of truth and right to create a feeling in their favour. That is a lip-homage which is content with mere assertions. A deep perception of truth shows itself in a strong desire to communicate it to others and practise it oneself. The intensity of the feeling will doubtless depend on the

depth of one's emotional nature, which also determines the extent to which one can impress the truth on the minds of others. But everybody ought to be able to give an account of his perception of truth and right in the influence it has had on his conduct and on that of his neighbours. The difficulties which innovation has to contend with, are pretty much the same everywhere. The institutions to be reformed, embody an aspect of the truth, which disclosed itself at the time they arose. An age of loose morals, for instance, manifested the importance of strengthening the marriage tie so that even death could not dissolve it. That perception of the truth carried a corresponding feeling with it and expressed itself in the institution of permanent widowhood. If, now under a better appreciation of womanhood and what is due to it and by the light of the absurdities to which that institution has been reduced by infant marriages and the unlimited licence to marry allowed to men, that truth so held appears to require modification, that modification has to be announced and a corresponding feeling created in the hearts of the people. To announce the new truth and get it accepted of the people and produce the necessary feeling, is the duty of those who see the truth themselves. This they can do by practising it in their own case, when an opportunity offers and giving their active sympathy to those who do so, as also by preaching and writing. When they do that and not without it, do they acquit themselves of their duty in the matter. All reform, moreover, has a religious side to it. And when that is brought forward the work of propagation becomes all the more easy and sure of success. Religion kindles the necessary passion sooner and with greater intensity both in the preacher and in those to whom it is preached, than any mere earthly considerations do. It brings faith in the ultimate triumph of the cause and teaches the lesson of patience in the meanwhile. Indeed, the proper attitude of all reformers who are convinced of the justice of their cause, is always one of hope. Faith in religion further inspires them to work and work under the belief that success is always sure and that they can be, if God so chooses, instruments in his hands to carry the reform through. For the cause they strive for, is not their own, but of the people and of God who directs the affairs of the world. If they fail, the cause does not suffer on that account. Some workers are no doubt better qualified than others. But all are bound to

work, and when they do so, if they do not succeed, they at least by their example invite others to labour with them and after them, who may achieve what they fail to do. For aught that one knows, they themselves may have been chosen to earn the success they desire. At any rate until they have tried and done their best, they cannot say that it is out of their reach. The true reformer does not wait to make nice calculations and take accurate measurements of his capacities and of the magnitude of his task. He works, because he must. He may not like to see the happy issue. That is no consideration to weigh with him. He will at any rate light the torch which shall pass from hand to hand and ultimately illumine the whole land. If such a man is not himself a great man of the cause, he is the sure precursor of one, aye, of a race of such men. The sceptical public which has yet to be converted, may and will say that the man is too puny for his work but in the ranks of the reformers themselves, each one ought to say, "However unworthy, I am not unfit to work. If I do not succeed, my efforts will at least serve to call out those who will."

My Religious Views

- (1) God is all good.
- (2) He wishes the greatest happiness of mankind, His creatures.
- (3) It is, therefore, the duty of every man to act consistently with God's wishes—to do good to the human race, and to avoid evil to the same.
- (4) Every one should do his utmost to increase the sum of human happiness.
- (5) Now, the sum of human happiness enjoyed at a given time, = (equals) the sum of happiness enjoyable as the result of knowledge of the arts and sciences; (minus) the quantity of happiness destroyed by men in consequence of misconduct.
- (6) It follows mathematically, therefore, that the quantity on the left side of the equation may be increased in only two ways, namely, by increasing the positive quantity on the right side of the equation, and by reducing the negative quantity on the same side. In other words, the sum of human happiness may be increased by (A) increasing the knowledge of the arts and sciences; (B) Diminishing the destruction of happiness by bad men.

(7): Under the head (A) an unlimited field is presented. For instance, promote agriculture and increase the food of man. Promote mechanics and make human labour more fruitful. Promote medicine and augment human health and so on.

(8) Under the head (B) also much may be done. Prevent men *destroying* any part of human happiness. Inculcate a benevolent disposition. Teach men to abstain from all actions which do more evil than good, which produce more pain than pleasure. In fact teach men Religion, Morals and Politics.

—*Raja Sir T. Madhavrao.*

Cure for Spiritual Despondency

Life is full of trials, tribulations and temptations. The purest and the best of us cannot escape them. Success is the goal of man's endeavours. To strive for success is one of man's many duties in this world. Man can, however, but work and hope for success. It is not given to him to command it. This is a Divine law under which man has to learn to work out his physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual salvation.

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Man is a social being. As a member of society he has to perform certain duties. Every one of us tries to perform them according to his opportunities and is thankful to God if he finds that he is not worse than his neighbours. But the man, who wants to live his life true to his inner convictions and also wants to serve society without being false to his own self, often finds himself standing, as it were, on the horns of a dilemma. Society, its customs and its mandates pull him one way, while his conscience and reason pull him in the opposite direction. What is he to do in such circumstances? Is he to be a slave or a freeman? If he is made of the stuff of which all good and true men are made, he does not hesitate to make his choice. He becomes, in the words of Emerson, a nonconformist, because he prefers freedom to slavery.

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Having made his choice he must be prepared to pay its price. In becoming a non-conformist he finds himself at war with society. Society is a very autocratic despot and punishes the rebel with the

suddenness and certitude of a lightening stroke. Then comes the man's hour of trial, tribulation and temptation.

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He finds himself deserted by those who are dear and near to him. His friends, if he had any, keep leagues away from him. If he is a poor man, society makes his life unbearable to him in a thousand ways. If he is a rich man, he finds that wealth is no armour against the poisoned darts of slander and calumny which society incessantly throws at him. He, too, finds that despite his wealth society can make his life miserable.

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It is when placed in such circumstances that man finds himself utterly desolate. It is at such time that he needs human sympathy most. He finds that it is withheld from him because he declines to be "a dumb driven cattle." Then he turns to God, but he, oftentimes, finds that his prayers are not answered and that His Father in heaven has turned His face away from him.

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Now let us try to examine briefly the cause of this spiritual despondency through which every man who puts his trust in God and tries to walk along the path of duty and righteousness, has to pass at one time or another of his life. In the first place let us bear in mind that because we feel forsaken by God it does not mean that we are really forsaken by Him. The ways of the Lord are mysterious. And the man who reposes his trust in Him, though he may at times feel that his God has forsaken him, still hopes that his God will *not* forsake him. Here let us make a distinction between *the feeling* of Faith and *the hope* of Faith. In the first case, we think that God is present with us but, for one reason or another, He seems to be withholding His help and guidance from us, whereas in the second case, we hope, in spite of these experiences, that though help and guidance are withheld for the present, they will be vouchsafed to us in future.

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The fit of spiritual despondency is not necessarily the result of lack of faith in God and His righteousness. It may arise from causes purely physical. Philosophy, it is said, is no cure for toothache. Similarly a man's religious faith is sorely tried by his

physical environment. It is very difficult to convince a good man who through no fault of his gets no work to do and in consequence has to go without food for days together, when he sees men positively vicious, nay, every way a disgrace to society, driving in motors and enjoying every comfort that money can buy for them, that this world is ruled by a just God, Who is our Father and Whose children we are. No wonder if a starving man or one whose dear and near ones are suffering acute agonies for lack of a few necessities of life, declines to believe that God is Love.

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A certain kind of physical environment, therefore, in some cases, is the cause of religious despondency, and, in some cases, of positive atheism or agnosticism. A good man suffering from an incurable malady may also fall in a fit of religious despondency. Instances of this kind have been noticed by us all. But few of us have really cared to look beyond the surface of things. The man of faith tries to find out the silver lining in the cloud and thence derives courage and fortitude to bear his burdens, because he believes and hopes that his struggles are being watched by One Who will not fail to come to his help when he really needs it.

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Yet another cause of religious despondency is the mistake we make in depending for comfort, consolation and help on man. Human sympathy and human companionship, no doubt, are a great help and comfort to a man in his hour of trial and tribulation. But a man is, even at his very best, but a fickle-minded creature. He is a creature of moods. Therefore we cannot rely upon the constancy of human sympathy and help. The slightest difference over trifles has driven friends of years away from one another. Therefore we should not look to human aid to comfort and help us when perhaps we may need it most. And there are occasions in man's life when no human help can supply the balm to the wounds which certain calamities may have inflicted upon him. But one physician can supply that balm. That physician is God, our Father. He is the cure of all spiritual despondency because "He is not affected by our mutability, our changes do not alter Him. When we are restless He remains serene and calm; when we are low, selfish, or dis-spirited, He is still the unalterable *I am*, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

The Pride of Spirit

The sin which leaves the character of man last is pride. And of all kinds of pride spiritual pride is the most inveterate. The greatest and most insidious danger about it is, that it is seldom recognized as pride. It often takes shelter under the cloak of faith. Sometimes it delights to get itself recognized as moral firmness. Sometimes it takes the form of severity to vice. But whatever the form be, the substance of pride is always the same. It wants to exalt itself above other men. It embitters the mind against every thing that tends to lower the prestige of the proud man. The painful sign of this spiritual malady is that it promotes strange self-forgetfulness. Vices are seen as virtues by the proud man in his own nature. Those faults which he is the very first to detect and punish in other men, never awaken his attention in his own case. He is blind to those faults in him which are most glaring to other men. Hence though other men may be reformed through him, he is the very last to be reformed. The test by which spiritual pride is to be detected in character is that it never produces peace. Cheerfulness is never the result of vanity. Sweetness of disposition is never the Child of self-exaltation. Purity seldom abides with the spirit of vanity and self-esteem. It is therefore said pride goeth before destruction. The strange fact in spiritual life is that the further a man advances in piety, the further he advances in humility. In fact the proud have no protection. If they make themselves too terrible to others to assail them, do not their own passions assail them? Beware therefore and watch with the utmost jealousy, the rising impulses of pride. The enemy is most insidious, most persistent and most difficult to check.

To the Portrait of Ram Mohan Roy

"Noble countenance! Beaming eyes! O thou illustrious progenitor of a new race! India's pride! Long may thy hallowed memory dwell in thy country's grateful heart! Half a century ago (1828) thy genius bright, under Heaven's guidance, opened a new world of thought, a New Church, to thy ignorant countrymen. Alas! Little did they know what untold treasure thou gavest them. Its height and depth they comprehended not. To millions sunk in gross idolatry and superstition thou didst boldly preach the One God. Nay,

in their midst, and in the face of fierce opposition, thou didst raise a Tabernacle unto His glory. How this small band has developed into a mighty community scattered all over the country, thou, Great Reformer, has not lived to see. Thou didst sow the seed; we reap the harvest. Thy original mind did not merely attempt a revival. Thy hand was mainly employed in clearing the jungle of polytheism and restoring the ancient monotheism of the Vedanta. But thou didst not remain satisfied with this. Boldly didst thou cull truth from a foreign faith and commend it to thy countrymen. The parallel streams of conviction and character, belief and life, devotion and conscience, have flowed ever since through the life of educated India. Honor, all Honor, to the India's illustrious benefactor! Heaven-sent teacher, at thy feet we sat to learn the eclectic truth and devotion which thou camest to teach. May thy loud protests against idolatry, which those lips seem to be still uttering with heavenly enthusiasm, roll backward and forward throughout the land! May thy public spirit animate the heart of the thousands of young men who gather in this Hall from time to time! May Young India accept thy eclectic faith, cast off idolatry, and go back to the earlier scriptures. May the wisdom, courage and enthusiasm which characterized thee find their place in our character! Blessed patriot, benefactor of thy race, light of India, speak, speak continually unto us thy new gospel of Theism. Our teacher and our leader, may thy soul prosper in the realm of light and joy! So prays grateful India."

—K. C. S.

Death

O Death! how sweet the thought
 That this world's strife is ended;
 That all we feared and all we sought
 In one deep sleep is blended.
 No more the anguish of to-day
 To wait the darker morrow,
 No more stern call to do or say,
 No brood o'er sin and sorrow;
 O Death how dear the hope
 That through the thickest shade
 Beyond the steep and sunless slope,

Our treasured store is laid
 The loved, the mourned, the honoured dead
 That lonely path have trod.
 And that same path we too must tread, to be with
 them and God. —Dean Stanley.

Renouncing the World

The world is a snare and an abode of misery; therefore, leave that world and follow God, such is the burden of the songs of some of our saints. Do not give up wife and children, build for yourself spacious houses etc. and serve the Lord by doing your duty in this world, sings Tukaram in his well-known Abhang. The saints by their words seem to contradict one another. What is the ordinary man of the world to do in these circumstances? Which advice is he to follow? Is there no clear path cut out for him along which he might make his pilgrimage of the world and not lose his soul? Let us try to see if we can find some clear principles underlying the apparently contradictory statements of the saints.

What do the saints mean by the world? Do they mean by it the stars in the firmament, the hills and the valleys, the ocean, the rivers, the trees, the plants and the natural scenery which delight the eye of man and refresh his spirit? When the saints ask us to renounce the world, they cannot mean that we should give up looking for God in nature and learning from the immutability underlying Nature's laws; that He Who presides over the world rules it not by caprice but by laws which embrace within their sphere the whole creation from the electron to the stars in the firmament. As an American writer has put it. "There is not a sparrow falls to the ground but what event is recorded everywhere, by a change in the condition everywhere. Nor is there a flower in the crannied wall, nor any least part of a flower, or of any thing else, but whose states, if we knew them all in all, would not represent the states of each and everything that is." We know how this truth regarding plant life is borne out by some of the discoveries of Dr. Sir Jagadish Bose. To renounce the world as it is represented by these things, therefore, would mean that we should deprive ourselves of the means of acquiring knowledge of God and His ways which would, surely,

come to us by a study of those things, if carried on in the right spirit. The saints, therefore, could not have meant that we should renounce the world whose study would lead to a better knowledge of God and His ways.

What then do the saints want us to renounce? Do they want us to give up the society of men and women who inhabit the world? Are we to understand them as telling us: Love not men, but love God. This cannot be their meaning because that would mean that they want us to love God by neglecting the duties that we owe to our brethren and sisters. It would mean that God is a jealous God in the human sense of the word and does not like our loving our brethren and sisters. It would also mean that we love God the more by loving man the less. This therefore, could not be their meaning when the saints ask us to leave the world and follow God.

We think, when saints ask us to leave the world, they mean by that word what is called "worldliness" in the phraseology of religion. What is worldliness? It is not easy to give an exact definition of the word. We might roughly describe it as consisting in attachment to three things—to the Outward, to the Transitory and to the Unreal. As an example of our love for the Outward, we might instance, the pleasure, be it coarse or refined, which comes from indulgence in the emotions of an hour and which affects the senses only. As an example of our love for the Transitory, we might instance, what is called the lust of the eye, that is for pleasure and enjoyment which come from gazing on form and colour which have but a transient existence. As an instance of our love for the Unreal, we might mention our desire to hear men speak well of us—"an estimate which depends upon wealth, rank and circumstances." If we will bear these three aspects of worldliness and their evil influence on human character in mind it will not be difficult for us to understand what the saints mean when they ask us to renounce the world and follow God.

Now let us try to discuss briefly the three aspects of worldliness which we have called attachment to the Outward, the Transitory, and the Unreal. Man must love something. Human mind abhors a vacuum. Therefore it must be always filled with one thought or another. If it is full of the love of the world then there shall be no

room in it for the love of God. Man's affections, in this world, are always fixed on one thing or another, on one thing, perhaps more strongly than on another. They are fixed either on wife or children, or on wealth or rank, or on something else which the world reckons as worth human endeavour. Man must have his affection fixed on some object. That is the law of his being. He cannot change it. He can but make his choice. He may love one thing. But something he must love.

It is thus that the heart that was made to love God and in that love to embrace all humanity, turns away from God-appointed duties and loses itself in the pursuit of things which are of the earth—earthly and therefore by their very nature perishable. Hence it is that saints ask us to renounce the world, that is, the pursuit of things purely worldly and make “God our Rest, because He is the only One who can quench the fever of our desire.” —Y. N. T.

Address to the Rupee

Thou white mystic circle, the exerted souls of men and women dance around thee as the mad witches round the ring of fire in night time. I will fly from thy necromancy—Thou false shining surface, whom every touch defiles, thou glaring disc with the woman's face on thee, seemest thou not to reflect every pleasure and desire that is in man's frail, fickle heart? Yet every glow-worm joy which thou buyest turns into slime and stench in the hand which grasps it. Let me beware of thee—Thou art everybody's prisoner, perpetually sent from jail to jail, yet thou dost imprison all thy jailors, holding their hearts in bondage, while they hold thee in nominal possession. I will ever try to remain free from thy arts—Thou wheel of fate, whoso rides on thee once, knows never more the end of his journey, rolling from fear to hope, from hope to fear again, to endless cares, to sudden destruction, to giddy elation, all elation vain, till death snatches him for ever beyond vanity. Touch me not, tempt me not—thou the price of all sin, the bribe of all falsehood, the way to all guilty indulgence, the faith of all vain-glory, thou who shuttest even the needle's eyes in the rich man's passage to heaven, avaunt, avaunt!—yet, turn to the other side. O thou well-earned reward of the poor man's labour, thou feedest my children,

blessest me with food and medicine. I never sought thee, yet I found thee when I was in need. I know not who sends, and from what hands thouallest upon my house, as the dew upon the grass. I wish to spend thee for that for which I spend myself, the love and service of God. I labour like the honest workman not to earn thee, but the blessing of my Father. And in finding the latter who ever lacked true wealth. Promote all noble activity, all charity, relieve all suffering, console the wretched, O Rupee, and even thou too wilt have accomplished thy mission.

Faith and Fire

Enthusiasm is the soul of success. It is your enthusiasts to whom the world is indebted for all its progress. Heat and force are convertible terms. No heat, no life. This is true as well of the spirit as of matter. In the physical world motion can be converted into heat and heat into motion. This is an established fact of science. Locomotives and mills, muskets and guns all bear testimony to the fact that heat is energy. Logs of wood and piles of coal are so much energy reserved for future use. They furnish examples of a particular mode of conservation of energy. Take a quantity of cold water, what power, what force has it? But put it in a boiler and apply heat to it, and it will produce power sufficient to carry an express train at the rate of sixty miles an hour. The man of prudence, cautious, calculating and time-serving—what is he but a mass of ice, cold and lifeless, without warmth, without energy? The world owes nothing to him. Such men have never done, will never do, any great and permanent good to humanity. They have never been able to move inert masses of men—to instil life and freshness into a rotten society. For such work we want men like Luther, Knox and Wilberforce—men of warmth and enthusiasm, self-forgetful, fervent and devoted, ready to sacrifice everything near and dear to them, to shed the last drop of their life-blood for the cause of humanity. Call them fanatics, call them any thing else you like, one such man is worth the whole host of your so-called politic men.

It is only a heated body that can communicate heat. Tons of ice cannot make a cold object warm, but a spark of flame can set fire to a whole city. He who means to bear witness

unto the truth must be warm in heart, must be enthusiastic. Enthusiasm is life. A cold reformer is a contradiction in terms. Truth spurns a cold admirer. He who means to bear witness unto the truth should be "baptised with fire." "The soul is dead that slumbers." And how can the dead instil life into the dead? The blind cannot lead the blind, nor can he that is without life give life to others. He who feels no enthusiasm for the cause he stands up to support is sure to do more harm than good to it.

But what is the source of this energy? It is faith-unwavering faith that generates the fire which carries everything before it. Faith in God, and in the ultimate triumph of Truth and Justice, conquers all weakness. Faith makes a man strong and fearless.

"Faith conquereth weakness, want and woe, for it findeth in God manifold power, sustenance and joy.

"It is the victory of the spirit over the flesh, of truth over the world.

"Faith counteth the thought of weakness, wickedness and the language of weakness an abomination.

"I cannot—Faith never uttereth that odious phrase.

"For betwixt the will and work it findeth the path straight.

"That it willeth that it doth, and never doubteth success.

"Faith is a mighty giant whose nerves are of steel and whose eyes speak defiance.

"It feareth no man and despiseth the threats and intimidations of the mighty.

"Sovereigns quail before it, and from crowned heads it exacteth homage.

"It prostrateth millions in open encounter and planteth God's banners before the cannon's flash.

"It worketh wonders and achieveth impossibilities and the world in amazement doth say—what manner of man is this who worketh these miracles?

"For faith is strong in the strength of the Almighty and hath invincible power."

Something to Ponder

What is the oldest of all things ?

"God, because He has always existed."

What is the most beautiful of all things ?

"The Universe, because it is the work of God."

What is the greatest of all things ?

"Space, because it contains all that is created."

What is the most constant of all things ?

"Hope, because it still remains with man, after he has lost everything else."

What is the best of all things ?

"Virtue, because without it there is nothing good."

What is the quickest of all things ?

"Thought, because in less than a minute it can fly to the end of the Universe."

What is the strongest of all things ?

"Necessity, which makes man face all the dangers of life."

What is the easiest of all things ?

"To give advice."

What is the most difficult of all things ?

"To know Thyself."

—A Sage to a Sophist.

The Personal in Religion

Human conduct in some respects resembles the art of painting. As long as a painter does not throw his ideal conception on the canvas before him, with the aid of his magic pencil his internal ideal is a veiled mystery to others. He may exert his powers of speech to the utmost, he may try to delineate in words with the aid of his imagination, the various lines of light and shade, may describe the main features of his ideal picture and the beautiful tints that he

has to reproduce ; he may do all that and more, yet as long as his picture is only in the ideal and has not been made real by the actual touches of his pencil, his speech but conveys a meagre and imperfect idea of his grand conception. What a picture ideally conceived is to one really reproduced on canvas, abstract virtue is to virtue realised in actual personal life. Thus a great moral and spiritual character is a revelation of God in the same sense in which a beautiful picture is the revelation of the artist behind it. A great character is God's ideal thrown on the canvas of human life.

Ram Mohun—The Epoch Maker

It has been repeatedly pointed out from public platforms or in the pages of the periodical press that there was no department of national reform which Raja Ram Mohun Roy did not touch and of which he was not the fore-runner. Indeed for these sixty years after his death in 1833 no reformer in India has attempted or achieved anything, in any line that the Raja had not previously tried. It is a well-known fact that after his final settlement in Calcutta he principally occupied himself with four distinct reforms: (1) the introduction of the worship of the one true God, as opposed to the idolatrous practices of his countrymen (2) the suppression of the cruel custom of Sati ; (3) The introduction of English Education into this country ; (4) the creation of Bengali literature. But it is not as widely known that he busied himself with questions of legal and political reform also. His exertions in connection with the liberty of the press, and his remarkable petition to the King of England are not generally known to his countrymen. Who knows that in liberating the press of India in the year 1835, Sir Charles Metcalfe was not partly influenced by the previous agitations on the subject carried on a few years back by Ram Mohun Roy and Dwarka Nath Tagore ? As for the reform of the law, lawyers are more competent to pronounce an opinion on that subject, but no less an authority than the Hon'ble Dr. G. D. Banerjee gave it out as his opinion at a public meeting that several reforms of Hindu law suggested by Ram Mohun Roy have been subsequently adopted, showing that the Raja was ahead of his times in every thing. It is also a fact that in his evidence before the Committee of the House of

Commons given in England, the Raja laid down, for the Guidance of the Indian Government, several principles towards which the Congress movement is now pushing. Thus having shown the way to his countrymen almost in every point, in religious, political and social reform, the Raja crowned all, by his visit to a foreign land. Let those who are now moving heaven and earth to persuade their countrymen to consent to take to the sea-voyage reflect on the Raja's courage in having defied public opinion in those days, for opening a door of future progress as it were for his countrymen. He went there to discharge a sacred duty to secure the overthrow of the Sati petition that had been sent to Parliament by the Orthodox Hindus of Calcutta, after the final suppression of the inhuman practice by Lord William Bentinck. He had also a desire to be present in England, during the discussions necessarily arising in connection with the renewal of the East India Company's Charter, which was then imminent. In visiting England, therefore, genuine patriotism, the sincere desire to secure some social and political advantages for his country, was his leading motive.

With the eye of genius he beheld the coming future and tried to prepare his countrymen for the inevitable. From the alternated circumstances of the country, after the establishment of the British rule, it was evident to him that the old order of things could not last. Change was imminent and inevitable. Though the rage for orientalism was very great even amongst Europeans in his days, he felt that the doors could not be long shut against English Education. By his extensive researches into the domain of Western knowledge he was also aware, that in the dissemination of that knowledge lay a new life for his people. Hence he strove so earnestly for its introduction. In the matter of religious reform he felt with the presentiment of true genius, that the religion of future India, was destined to be a broad and catholic faith, which would equally embrace all sects and denominations. In point of social reform, the condition of women attracted his first notice. And who will say that he did not act the part of the true reformer also?

Rules of Conduct

Never be idle. If your hands cannot be usefully employed, attend to the cultivation of your mind. Always speak the truth.

Keep good company or none. Make few promises. Live up to your engagements. Keep your own secrets if you have any. When you speak to a person, look him in the face. Good company and good conversation are the very sinews of virtue. Good character is above all things else. Never listen to loose or idle conversation. You had better poison in your blood than in your principles. Your character cannot be essentially injured except by your own acts. If any one speaks evil of you, let your life be so virtuous that none will believe him. Drink no intoxicating liquors. Ever live, misfortune excepted, within your income. When you retire to bed, think over what you have done during the day. Never speak lightly of religion. Make no haste to be rich, if you would prosper. Small and steady gains give competency with tranquility of mind. Never play at any game of chance. Avoid temptation through fear that you may not withstand it. Earn your money before you spend it. Owe no man anything. Never borrow if you can possibly avoid it. Be just before you are generous. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

The Formation of Habits

Habit is second nature, and sometimes even more powerful than nature. It exercises a powerful influence on character. It drags a man, as it were, with irresistible influence, towards virtue or vice. But, however strong the force of habit may be, it can be over-come if one is resolved upon breaking it up. The most hardened sinners have been changed when brought under the influence of a living faith. Bad habits can be overcome by forming good ones. And in forming these, men must go through a process similar to what they have undergone in contracting evil habits. In other words, the same good actions must be repeated every day. At first the doing of this must be irksome, but in time it becomes a source of pleasure, "Pitch upon that course of life which is most excellent, and habit will render it the most delightful," says Pythagoras.

• We must always remember that our appetites expand by indulgence. If we wish to put them down, we must seek to starve them out. It is a physiological law, that any organ that does not receive nutrition becomes atrophied. The same rule holds in the

spiritual world. When any evil desire is not gratified, it becomes weak and at last it dies out.

It is a spiritual law that as the lower nature sinks, the higher one rises. When the flesh dies, the spirit begins to grow. Every individual is conscious of his weaknesses. He should, therefore, fly from the temptations to which he is peculiarly exposed. He must persevere in watchfulness and prayer, lest he should be overtaken by his lower impulses in an unguarded moment.

In the formation of good habits, nothing is so helpful as association with the good. The society of such men has an elevating influence on character. It serves to strengthen our virtuous principles, and to weaken our selfish instincts. In fact, a man rises above himself when he comes in contact with God-fearing and pious souls. If any one thinks he is above the necessity of cultivating the companionship of the wise and the good, he ignores the conditions under which spiritual life grows. The spirit of reverence, awakened in the breast of the wicked by their coming in contact with holy men, serves to change the whole character.

To counteract the influence of bad habits, men must seize the good moments of life, when the desire to be good is awakened by hearing some stirring sermon or hymn, by reading a good book, or by any similar influences. They are the most precious portions of our life, and we should not suffer such moments to pass away without turning them to the best account. At such periods of life we should seriously meditate upon the object of our existence, seek solitude, and commune with our Maker. When He, out of his infinite goodness, inspires us with noble impulses, we should treasure them up. But so thoughtless are we that we too often forget the high thoughts that visit us occasionally. In breaking up our habits, we should not be slow or indolent. We should not put it off till tomorrow. If we are really anxious to get rid of bad habits, the sooner we begin the work the better. "Procrastination is the thief of time." How many souls have been wrecked by postponing the reformation of their lives for a day or two? It was hard for them to give up the present gratification, and they waited for a time, when it would be less hard, but in vain.

Without some sort of systematic discipline, there can be no stability of character. The unsteadiness and fickleness of character

which is so common in the world, is due to men's being guided by their impulses. It is by constant drill that out of the most unpromising materials the most heroic characters have been developed. Life must be brought under certain rules, if we wish to bring out the virtues the germs of which are within us. It is necessary that we should form certain habits that we may acquire stability of character, and most important of these are specified below.

1. The habit of untiring industry. Nothing is so inimical to spiritual progress as sloth, the rust of the soul. It eats away the stamina of life. It is a powerful cause of moral ruin. The busy man is said to be tempted by one devil, and idle man by a thousand. It is the industrious man that truly enjoys leisure; for his time being regularly assigned to various duties, he is free, when they are finished.

2. The habit of worshipping God. To a devout soul, no duty is so agreeable as offering thanks to his Maker for the manifold blessings he has received at His hands, and pouring out to Him his griefs and sorrows when he is afflicted. The man who neglects worship is an object of pity, for he misses the highest bliss that is attainable in this life. There ought to be fixed hours of worship in every family, which no secular business should be allowed to interfere with.

3. The habit of retiring into solitude for sometime every day. How often do we forget ourselves in the bustle of the world! How readily are we deceived by its superficial attractions! But among them the soul pines away in an uncongenial atmosphere. It is when we withdraw ourselves from the distracting and disturbing influences around us, that our true self awakens. In fact, spiritual culture is impossible if we always hanker after the pleasures of society and suffer ourselves to be engaged in worldly business. If we are true to ourselves, we must seek retirement to meditate on the destiny of life and our relation to our Maker. The great thinkers, poets, and religious leaders of men, sought solitude to escape from the frivolities of life. We must tread in their footsteps if we wish to attain a better life.

—I. M.

A True Seeker after God

A real devotee of God lives in a higher world of thought, feeling and action. He looks at the quiet heavens and silent stars and they sing for him in distinct tones a song, the depth and melody of which send a thrill of joy through his whole frame. He is haunted with visions of moral beauty and loveliness. In the world without and the world within, in nature and in man, he beholds the Divine presence infinite, everlasting, serene and sweet, and he loses himself in silent admiration. Peace and quiet reign in his heart. Low passions do not disturb his soul and worldly greatness has no charms for him. The approbation of man he does not seek; he seeks God and is content with doing secret worship to Him. He is truthful, sincere, plain, and frank in his dealings with men. He is silent as regards his own doings and merits, he never thinks much of them; they always fall far short of his ideal. He never obtrudes himself on the notice of men; if he comes out of his solitude, he does so because an inward force impels him. He is silent; if he speaks, he does so because the Holy spirit inspires him.

The Evil of Sectarianism

After a long spell of Scepticism, born of science which is naturally concerned with the process of creation, not with its origin or value, there seems to have set in a favourable reaction in the modern mind towards religion. In consequence of this a large section of men have become ready to surrender themselves, with unreasoning impetuosity, to the rigid grip of creeds that had their genesis in the history of a remote past with its limited range of knowledge. It is also having upon other minds the contrary effect of discrediting religion altogether, arousing against it suspicion, if not contempt.

We have seen in our own country a recrudescence of the blind faith that makes no discrimination between the spiritual significance of a religion and its other crust that not only obscures it, but gives it a materialistic grossness of structure. Men who follow such path of indiscriminate acceptance, go to the length of defending their position by a philosophy according to which all conceptions and

representations of the infinite have a uniform value, being all equally inadequate or irrelevant. Such sophistry makes it lazily easy for us to confine our devotion within the boundaries of our own sect, and unthinkingly allow our minds to confuse customs that are inert, with the wisdom that has eternal dynamic force. It is a symptom of our egotism, this clinging with fanatical fervour to all that is accidental in our religion, making it inhospitable, and a source of endless strife. Such a religious attitude of mind is the greatest calamity, specially in the present age, for the peace and welfare of man.

Sectarianism is materialistic. It ever tries to build its tower of triumph with its numerical strength, temporal power and external observance. It breeds in the minds of its members a jealous sense of separateness that gives rise to conflicts more deadly than conflicts of worldly interest. It is a worse enemy of the truth of religion than atheism, for sectarianism proudly appropriates as its own share the best portion of the homage that we bring to our God.

To-day science has offered us facilities that bring the human races outwardly close to one another, yet, curiously enough, it is our religions that zealously maintain the inner barriers that separate, and often antagonise, nations and peoples,—their respective votaries not even hesitating blasphemously to take God's own name to humiliate or mortally injure their fellow-beings who happen to belong to a different community. And it is high time for us to know how much more important it is, in the present age, to be able to understand the fundamental truths of all religions and realise their essential unity, thus clearing the way for a world-wide spiritual comradeship, than to preach some special religion of our own, with all its historical limitations.

The evils that have followed in the wake of the present meetings of the races—the evils of political and economic exploitation—should not find in the religious organisations, allies for the creation of dissensions that are truly impious. We must give heed to the call of the present age which urges us to train our mind not merely into a passive tolerance, but into an active understanding of the religions which are not ours, which but differently emphasise some particular phase of truth, some special process of spiritual realisation.

There are those who have the imperialistic tendency of mind which leads them to believe that their own religion has the sole right

to bring the whole human world under its undisputed dominance. They dream of a unity which consists of a grim solitude of "one," barren and colourless as a desert. But the unity which is at the root of creation, comprehends the countless many, and gives them the rhythm of kinship. Monotony is of death, life is a harmony of varied notes.

The truth which is impersonal is science; the path to approach it is the same for all of us,—the sole path of reason that has no individual variedness. The truth which is supremely personal is God, and paths that lead to Him are not one, but are manifold according to the differences in our personality. The knowledge about this personal truth can never be solely through reason, but must be mostly through sympathy; to know it perfectly is the same as to be intimately related to it.

The personal realationship, in order to be real, has to seek out its own special path and find its idiomatic expression in the medium of its own language. But generally speaking, in the name of religion, our minds are moulded according to the one uniform sectarian standard prevalent in our own community. There with the exception of those who have rare spiritul gifts, the generality of men, without their knowing it are godless. They are pious, but not religious; they have not the courage of faith, but the habit of conformity. Such a cult of superficial creeds has, for most of us, brought down our idea of God to the level of the average, the conformable, the genteel mind, the mind ready to believe that God is on the side of the successful.

Religion is the expression of human aspriation seeking the fundamental unity of truth in the divine person of God. Whereas sectarianism uses religion itself to create disunion among men, sharpening its word for the killing of brothers as a part of the ritual of the Father's worship. Sectarianism is the dangerous form of worldliness that claims exclusive right to the spiritual illumination with its own narrow enclosure, and in the name of God refuses recognition to God himself where He is for all.

The history of man is the history of the building up of a human universe, as has been proved by the fact that everything great in human activity inevitably belongs to all humanity. And we may be

sure that all our religious experiences and expressions are building up from the depth of the ages one great continent of religions on which man's soul is to win its prosperity through the universal commerce of spiritual life.

—R. N. T.

Religious Vows for Young Men.

What I will not do.

1. I will not commit murder.
2. I will not commit adultery.
3. I will not use intoxicating drinks and drugs.
4. I will not keep company with wicked people.

What I will not be.

5. I will not be a liar.
6. I will not be an unbeliever.
7. I will not be a hypocrite.
8. I will not be an apostate.

Suitable Place for Worship

It is desirable to worship God sitting in a place where the mind becomes naturally elevated and the soul becomes easily united with the Holy Person. If one lives in a dirty and unclean place which is hot and full of bad smell, the mind becomes impure and is not easily inclined towards God. But what place can be more favourable (for divine communion) than one which is quiet, pure, clean, tidy, cool and level, where there is pure water, where there is no trouble of wind, where sweet sounds of birds are heard and where there are no unpleasant sights like unsympathetic persons. Therefore such a pure and lovely place has been commended by theists for the worship of God. One should worship in a place where the mind becomes elevated, purified and can remain without anxiety, for if the mind becomes anxious, disturbed by the impure thoughts, one cannot worship God properly.

Bhagwatdharma*

Immediate relation of God and the worshipper is the first and an important principle of this religion. His spiritual Providence cares for the helpless and the fallen. He is the living God who needs no mediator. He comforts the sinners and the lowly when approached in worship. Although many a creed and sect have grown within this Faith giving rise to countless excrescences, the idea that the worshipper or the devotee should be learned or possessed of high qualifications or even be of a high caste, is repugnant to the genius of 'Aryadharma.' The more restless and surrendering the devotee is, the more readily God becomes his Saviour. Sometimes, the worshipper asks for one thing and the Lord gives another but eventually leading to bliss. The distinctive teaching of this great religion is that God immediately touches the life of the devotee with His grace without the intervention of a human mediator.

The second cardinal, universal and if I may be permitted to say so, common principle, common to all branches of the Faith, is that it is no historical faith. It does not entertain the idea of a revelation in some definite time and space. That God revealed His light in this or that part of the world at a definite time to the exclusion of other places and times is not to be found in it. Many are its schools and sects but it is wonderful that none of them claims Aryadharma to be the teaching of any single prophet or scripture. There is, naturally, 'no first, no second' as applied to holy books and teachings within its fold. All are alike, equally revered. Not being a historical religion, it has this advantage in it that it cannot remain stagnant, for, fixed revelations stop progress. Hence the third principle of the Aryadharma is that it is not a static religion. It is like a tree that has grown, decayed, or else been pruned. It has assumed several aspects and in future also it will show a continuous growth that knows no limitation. New sects, transformations in forms, and fresh adjustments will surely take place in this dynamic and progressive movement. When we do not admit its historicity, it does not mean that we ignore the various land marks signified by scriptures like the Vedas for instance. We accept and, to a certain extent, revere them too. But we regard the Vedic stage as the earliest limitations; then came the Upanishads and later, the Puranas. Their diffuseness

*Translated from Marathi by Prof. S. V. Phadnis.

and prolixity led to devotional schools founded by different saints. They include also the 'Varkaris.' In this way, this Faith has gone through all the vicissitudes of its existence—viz : darkness, apathy, and old age. To-day, it stands like a tree having lost its foliage, as it were. It is on the eve of sprouting up a fresh life of growth once again.

Another wonderful feature of this great religion is that it has a definite teleology. The development of this religion has always a direction towards the creative and invigorating principle of love. It has a chequered history but almost, in every case, there has been progress due to the victory of the principle of love. Two thousand years ago, animals used to be killed for sacrificial purpose but, in the end, love triumphed and sacrifices were stopped. In spite of the limitations and disabilities like the caste and ritualism the teaching of non-violence has not only spread apace but has acquired tremendous sanction and is pregnant with possibilities.

'Bhagwatdharma,' thus, is the fragrant flower or the sweet fruit of the tree of religion, tree watered by the devotional stream running, as it were, from the feet of the Almighty. A minute thought will show how very intimate kinship exists between Bhagwatdharma and in spite of their superficial and external differences. The great men of this country have, through their inspired teaching and exemplary lives, have planned out the royal road to salvation through devotion. The Prarthana Samaj as also the Aryadharma stand for no fixed and written commandments. Brotherhood of man and love of humanity is the only prime commandment known to it. Nobody, now, should possibly question the propriety of associating the teaching of the Bhagwatdharma (its saints and books) with the pulpit of the Samaj.

—M. G. R.

The True Sage

Why should the pursuit of truth, for its own sake and without regard to consequences, be dangerous in theology, when it is commended in social and natural science? Truth needs no obsequious complaisant flattery, the only true homage to be paid to it is to follow it with a firm resolution to sacrifice everything to its behests. Dogmatism, however, because it is dogmatism, is to be everywhere

suspected. We admit that a religious or philosophic system may include a certain part or phase of truth, but we deny the possibility of its comprehending the absolute truth. All religion, perhaps, is defective and partial but it has none the less in it something of the divine. The great reformers and prophets of all ages who have protested against materialism and worked for the accomplishments of the great mission confided to them, have not worked and died in vain. The existence of martyrs is no proof of the truth of the religion for which they have suffered. Unhappily, all sects can point to a rich martyrology. But this, though it does not establish the truth of their dogmas, proves that religious zeal responds to something mysterious in the human heart. All who, in response to this inward emotion, have laboured to promote liberty of thought and sacrificed their own personal interest to truth and justice, have been true martyrs, and have chosen the better part. And he who without knowing why, but by simple nobility of nature, learns and follows the art of well-doing, is the true sage.

Love is Sacrifice

"People often talk about the happiness of doing good and of love to others. But love to others, if it is ever to be more than mere easy good nature, has to begin as a duty, in self-sacrifice. And as for doing good, real doing good is one of the hardest things in the world, requiring long, untiring sacrifice of self. Do not be deceived by that easy good nature which is often highly praised—the good nature that cannot refuse a child anything, if it only cries hard enough; and which likes to give to a beggar, even though persuaded that he is a fraud. Mostly, that is only a subtle form of self-indulgence, and finds it as hard to refuse a gratification to itself as to any one else.

The loving kindness that God expects of men is a very different thing. It is a stronger thing and harder thing. It has to begin in self-denial; in putting others before self; in being kind not only to friends, but to people you do not like and do not want to be kind to; in repaying rudeness with courtesy, evil with good. No easy good nature will carry through this. It requires earnest principle and the quiet suppression of self. So, in the beginning it *has* to be a cross. But it need not be so for long.

Begin by denying yourself, and by and by you forget yourself. The kindness which at first was just a duty becomes a pleasure and a joy. Self-denial turns into glorious self-forgetfulness. The cross of sacrifice is thus alone changed into a crown of love. Every cross of duty has its special crown of blessing. Hard, dogged industry will brighten into *happy activity*. Stern truth will strengthen life into a *fearless simplicity*. Firm patience will beget a *quiet immovable steadfastness*. Cheerfulness enforced at first by will become a *gracious contentment*, and self-sacrifice loses itself into the self-forgetfulness of *Love*. The upward way is not easy. It must be climbing to the end, with rest and peace in God alone."

Love the Basis of Peace

Education of youths is another potent factor in preventing war. Just as it was possible to have a system of education that encouraged the spirit of jingoism, militarism, self aggrandisement at the expense of the others, in the case of some of the countries of Europe before the last war, it is possible to have a system of education of our youths that would develop in them the spirit of love and friendliness, of mutual help and co-operation, of generosity in dealing with one another individually, socially, and nationally. While such a system would encourage the promotion of physical fitness by all methods that conduce to physical development, it would discourage the use of physical force for robbing the weak and oppressing the disabled. It is now time for all patriotic lovers of peace, be they members of legislatures, or leaders of public opinion, to gird up their loins and make a united assault on the system of education that encourages enmity and war and work for the introduction and strengthening of the system that would breed a mentality of aversion for war. Let the press and the platform combine to achieve this end.

—T. C. K.

Faith (4)**I**

Doubt no longer that the Highest is the wisest
and the best,
Let not all that saddens Nature blight thy hope
or break thy rest,
Quail not at the fiery mountain, at the shipwreck,
or the rolling
Thunder, or the rending earthquake or the famine,
or the pest !

II

Neither mourn if human creeds be lower
than the heart's desire !
Thro' the gates that bar the distance
comes a gleam of what is higher,
Wait till death has flung them open
when the man will make the Maker.
Dark no more with human hatreds
in the glare of deathless fire.

God, our Friend

We speak of God as the spirit of infinite Good, in whom we live and move and have our being. Then, we must realise that He besets us behind and before, and He is with us ever and always. In the silence of every heart where the soul cries out for His presence, He is there. And in that spirit we must send our prayer to Him, laying before Him all that we need and all our difficulties, as we would tell them to our bosom friend. Our friend knows our foibles and our merits. When we stand in the presence of God in church or in the loneliness of our room, we must open our heart to Him, and feel how imperfect, poor and unworthy we are, so that we may draw from Him the renewal of power to overcome all our defects, and be, as days pass on, more and more worthy of His companionship.

We must feel when we sit beside Him that we ought not to take His name merely upon our lips. For often, we behave in life like rebellious children who set at defiance their Father's will. But like the children again, with the transgression we long to come before Him, conscious that if we confess frankly, He will forgive us, asking us to sin no more. When we have done wrong and repent, there is no friend to whom we can come like unto God. Our earthly friends may frown upon us; those nearer at home may lack in sympathy with us. But He never fails. We may come to Him in silence; we may pillow our head upon His bosom; our thoughts may be mere sighs. But He will not cast us away, rebuke us or be cold to us. He is our sole refuge in such a state. From Him alone we shall get help and guidance. He alone blesses us, every one according to his needs. Therefore, looking upon God as our only and eternal friend, a friend in need, we must make ourselves more and more worthy of His love, must deepen our affection for Him and consecrate our nature.

We can deserve the friendship of this eternal and infinite spirit of Good, if in our turn we are true friends to those about us. We must pray for those who are not present with us, who, through trouble of body and soul, are kept away. We must minister to them, to those who are in sorrow or are weighed down by bereavement and grief. We must speak kindly to those who are in anguish. We must console those who complain and murmur, pray with them and bring to them, the hope and the conviction that God does everything for the best. God sanctifies into holiness all who come to Him as to their eternal friend. So we must be a source of purity, holiness and strength to those who trust us as friends. If we are God's children, we must behave as brothers unto one another and strive for peace and benevolence. Then alone we shall discover that He is a friend to us, an unfailing fountain of purity, strength, joy and help in our needs. "Wherever we go, He is always with us; He takes us by the hand and leads us on." We must trust Him, and let ourselves be taught by Him. If we but know how to subdue our will to Him, He will be ever our Friend.

Moral Precepts

1. God is holy, merciful and gracious, but He is also a God of justice.
 2. To God and not to man belongeth vengeance.
 3. Remember that God sees thee at all times.
 4. Acquaint thyself with God and be at peace.
 5. Be not wise in your own eyes.
 6. Be satisfied with moderate gain.
 7. Requite not evil with evil but with good.
 8. God knoweth our inmost thoughts.
 9. Real happiness consists of enjoying the favour of God.
 10. Virtue in youth ensures honour in old age.
 11. Mock not those who have any bodily defect, this is to mock God who made them.
 12. Learning without virtue and honesty is worse than ignorance.
 13. He who governs well himself is more to be praised than he who taketh a city.
 14. He who neglects daily prayer to God, will be judged amongst the wicked.
 15. Never do anything of which you are ashamed.
 16. Man's chief end is to serve God.
 17. What shall a man gain if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul.
 18. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.
 19. Sin is like a bee with honey in its mouth, but a sting in its tail.
 20. God says, 'serve me with the heart and not the lips.'
 21. Men are known from their company. A pigeon and crow do not occupy the same nest.
 22. Stones are good for building houses, and wood for doors, but to fall down and worship them is unwise ; worship God who is everywhere present.
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Workers with God

What is it being a true man of God? What is it to be faithful to our own creed, faith and religion? These are questions which often occur to a searching heart intent on attuning itself to the will of God. Know the God's will and do it: that is the answer to the questions. But how is God's will to be known? God's will is revealed only to him who has a pure heart—a heart purged clean of all duplicity and hypocrisy. The two often take the form of worldly wisdom. And the world is always too much with us. The wisdom of the world is always afraid of the opinion of the world, and that opinion, however rational on common pursuits of life, and work-a-day maxims of morality, is always wrong on matters between God and man. These matters are generally summed up under the term duty: what we owe to ourselves against the whole world, and what we owe to our Maker. Our creed, our faith, our religion—they are built up on the foundation of our intimate, personal relation with God. And if it is not merely an embodiment of custom and convention, it sorely tries us. And it is in such a trial that we are really tried and tested.

He who in this hour of trial remains true to the deeper instincts of the soul, and brushes aside everything else as subordinate to it, is the true man of God, is faithful to his creed, faith and religion. And this habit is not acquired on a holiday or Sunday principle. We cannot practise our religion on a Sunday and remain for the rest of the week indifferent to it. We cannot practise it at a particular hour of the day, and for all other time of the day live a life contrary to it. We cannot practise it only for ourselves and let others about us, who are near and dear to us, drift in life in a matter so vital. For such an attitude is sure to drag us down along with them. Either we take them along with us or else we are dragged down by them. There is no standing still in life, or moving alone to a higher attitude ourselves. We cannot breathe in a miasma of doubt, indifference and contrary principles, and not be caught by the infection. As we cannot shake off the physical atmosphere about us, so also with our moral and social atmosphere. Either we breathe healthy atmosphere and grow, or inhale the poison with which it is charged and die.

Those who, therefore, say that their creed, faith, religion is for themselves only, cannot grow religiously. They must needs do their best to bring up others to their level by precept and example. Of course, we cannot play each the role of the universal adviser and reformer. But it is up to us all the same to do something to level up the tone all around us, and dissipate the fumes of ignorance, superstition, and obstinacy which taint the atmosphere around us. If for nothing, at least that we may breathe freely, and really show our love to those whom we profess to love. We are all not only burden-bearers, but burden-sharers, brothers all in the pilgrimage of life. And if we think that our soul's salvation and material well-being are bound up with the practice of what we believe and preach, then that practice insists that those near and dear to us shall not fail us in that practice as well. Then are we true workers with God and his true servants.

New Year Precepts

In commencing a new year, some one says we may all save ourselves many regrets by bearing in mind the following maxims all through the year :—

You will never be sorry,
 For hearing before judging ;
 For thinking before speaking ;
 For holding an angry tongue ; ✓
 For stopping the ear to a tale-bearer ;
 For disbelieving most of the ill reports ;
 For being kind to the distressed ;
 For being patient towards everybody ; ✓
 For being good to all men ;
 For asking pardon for all wrongs ;
 For speaking evil of no one ;
 For being courteous to all.

Man does not Live by Bread Alone

In life we do not always get what we need. We, not unoften, lose much and are discomfited. What, then, is the fruit of life that we should most desire and strive for? We should seek to possess those things that are inseparably our own—the possessions which no chances and changes of life can ever deprive us of. When a man looks at life from this angle, he discovers that it is not the goods of this world that constitute the real part of his being. For great or small, a time comes when he has to leave them behind and go on his journey all alone. He is remembered and cherished by persons he leaves behind, not for what he had, but for what he was in himself, not for the wealth he accumulated but for the treasures of the spirit he laid by. Read the lives of the great and good ones who strove to make this world a better place to live in, who added to its joy, its blessedness, its faith in virtue and in the nobility of the soul, to its stock of peace, and intellectual and moral attainments, who worked against tremendous odds to endow man with a clearer gaze on the trend of life, with an insight into the workings of the human spirit, with an assurance of the heroism of man, of the aristocracy of talent, with the humanity and love of the common man, and you cannot help concluding that in this world and in the next the things that matter, at long last, are not pelf and power but conduct and character.

As we advance in life and attain poise, we realise more and more the truth of the saying that man does not live by bread alone, and that it availeth man and society nothing to gain the whole world and lose his or its soul. That is the lesson impressed by the study of biography, history, philosophy and literature. Who is remembered and loved better as the salt of civilisation and human society—Socrates or Croesus? Kings come and go, empires rise and fall, the so-called greatness built upon might and sword perisheth. What survives and saves is the contribution by individual and collective effort to the common stock of goodness, beauty and truth. Science that seeks to know the Ultimate Reality and works for the relief of man builds up the temple of the truth brick by brick and stone by stone. Poetry and noble literature reveal the beauty of life in spite of its darker side. It enables man to paint on the midnight sky of sorrow, the golden morrow. Philosophy impresses deeply the lesson that in life value and worth count more than bulk, mass and quantity, and the moral and

spiritual life is worth more than material greatness and mere intellectuality. Reason, which Aristotle described as the soul or the entelechy, is what man must seek to develop so that perfection for him, and through him, for the society to which he belongs may be assured. It is the informing spirit which leads us on to endeavour after a perfect life, that counts more here on earth than anything else. And he, who has let life slip by without the guidance of that spirit, has surely missed the greatest good that life had in store for him and, so far, failed to serve as a soldier in the liberation war of humanity.

—V. N. N.

Mirabai's Religion of Devotion

“To love my *Hari*, is my religion. I love Him and His *Bhakti* above all. My love is deep and I know that He loves me too. I do not like your lifeless forms of ritual and religion. *Hari*, Thou art one and alone in the whole universe, infinite in Thy numberless forms, infinite in Thy blessings, infinite in Thy love. To dwell in Thee is the sole object of my life; Thou art ever ready to be found and loved. Thou art the giver of life and so let life be lived in Thy service. Religions and ceremonies, worships and pilgrimages, *Vedas* and *Shastras*, all are an idle talk, unless, oh man, thou knowest thyself, thou knowest the truth of truths, thou knowest and lovest God, thou canst not realise the supreme bliss of inseparable communion with the Light of all Light, the Love of all Love, the One Eternal Loving Father.

A Model Man

That man no evil needs to fear,
 To whom all other men are dear.
 Who ne'er abuse in kind requites,
 Nor struck, again the smiter smites.
 Who neither fears, nor fear inspires,
 Who nurses no unblest desires,
 Who can himself endure neglects,
 But pays to other all respects.

Who, though himself by want opprest,
 Ne'er envies those by fortune blest,
 Who even in straits, would scorn to lie,
 And sooner, far, would dare to die.
 And thus from every weakness freed,
 Ne'er sins in thought, or word, or deed.
 A model man, who nobly lives,
 To all a bright example gives.

—*Mahabharat.*

Spiritual Growth of Tukaram (*The Poet-Saint of Maharashtra*)

Tukaram belonged to that long line of poets and saints who appeared in Maharashtra from time to time during the centuries that marked the close of the Middle Age. With a voice that was at once powerful and appealing, they raised a protest against the mistaken notions of renunciation, and against meek submission to tyranny, and roused the people to action and self-respect. In the common language of the people they taught them the simple and exalted truths about religion, about man's relation to his Creator and to his brother man, and about his responsibilities and duties in this world as a house-holder and as a member of the society. Tukaram was the last of that line which began with Dnyaneshwar, the great commentator of the *Bhagwatgeeta* in Marathi.

Tukaram was a peasant by birth and a tradesman by profession. He spent his life-time of fortyone years in the village of Dehu in picturesque surroundings on the banks of the Indrayani. With a large family to look after and sharp-tongued, termagant wife as a partner in life to put up with, Tukaram carried out his responsibilities creditably as a house-holder to the end of his life. Yet the hardships he had to pass through influenced his outlook on life which gradually became one of calm resignation, and his whole life became one single, supreme offering at the feet of *Panduranga*, the deity of Pandharpur, who was the idol of his worship. In praise of his God and as offerings of prayer and devotion to him Tukaram composed *Abhangas*, and these spread his fame far and wide. In common with

other saints, Tukaram had to suffer persecution at the hands of the learned Brahmins of his village who could not tolerate a man who was *Shudra* composing Abhangas and preaching to the people. They charged him with defiling the ancient learning and the Shastras, and as a penalty ordered him to drown his Abhangas in the river. Tukaram submitted to the order. With a heavy heart, he let down the bundle of his Abhangas—his very life-blood—into the river. After doing so, he remained on the bank without food, and would not return home. His wife, who, with the exception of her tongue, was an ideal *Pativratá*, and would not touch a drop of water until her lord ate, fasted by his side with her children. Fourteen days passed, and then, it is said, on surface of the river was seen the bundle of Abhangas dry and untouched by water. Tukaram's fame as a preacher reached the ears of Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha power. He sent his men to Tukaram with costly presents and with an invitation to visit his court. Tukaram accepted neither the presents nor the invitation, much to the dismay of his wife. In a polite and dignified reply, which he wrote in verse, Tukaram explained to Shivaji that "To a man like me, whose temptation and desire have left him, the small ant and a wealthy man are equal." He further says "What shall we gain by coming to you? It will only cause weariness of travelling" Alone among the saints of Maharashtra, Tukaram is believed to have quitted this world in his physical body. His biography narrated by his admiring followers concludes with the story that a 'Vimana' (Balloon) sent by Vishnu, the God of Vaikuntha, came down and carried Tukaram thither.

Tukaram was a great teacher, but never assumed the role of a teacher or claimed to have something extraordinary in him. His Abhangas which contained his teachings burst out of a yearning heart which could not contain its anguish. It was the anguish of a devotee seeking communion with his Lord. From the heart of Tukaram to the hearts of the millions, these Abhangas which number several thousands, have travelled through ages and have still retained the vividness of appeal. These Abhangas have given comfort to the weary, and provided light to those who groped in darkness. Thousands have derived spiritual solace from them and have therefore acknowledged Tukaram to be a great spiritual master. But, in his own eyes Tukaram was "a heap of all sins", and a humble creature

"under the deep debt of gratitude of saints who created an awakening in him."

Tukaram never renounced the world or its belongings. To him the "world and the wordly life were means wherein could be found supreme happiness, only if man rested his soul in the Highest Being." In one Abhanga he says, "Do not discard food ;—enter not the forest. Always meditate upon Narayan in thy heart." He cannot understand why some people advocate and adopt a life of renunciation. He asks them, "Why seek ye the solitude of the forest when there is joy amongst men?" Nor can he have any admiration for those who believe in outward forms of worship and religious practices. To them he says, "What indeed have ye gained by visiting the holy place? Ye have only cleansed the external skin!" There is a belief very common among people that the worship of God and the life in this world are things which cannot be reconciled with each other. The *sansara* is full of temptations and incidents which so influence the soul of man that it is carried away from its Creator. Tukaram was conscious of this doubt, and he prescribed the method of non-attachment. In a beautiful word picture he defines it; "Then will I associate myself with the daily life of the world even as the lotus-leaf resides in the water." With a fearlessness that can only arise from religious faith, Tukaram proceeded to show that wearing a rosary of beads or putting on the saffron robe or growing matted hair does not constitute a saint. Boldly he declared, "We know not what renunciation is ; one secret we know and that is to invoke the name of the Lord." According to him, what was required to live a life truly and well, was "not to forsake the wife and children, but to have pure devotion and to cultivate a spirit of non-attachment."

Tukaram could not appreciate the Advaita philosophy of the ancient prophets which seeks to identify the individual soul with the universal soul, and it had no use for him. He says, "I find no comfort in the Advaita ; my joy is found in ministering unto Thy feet." He boldly declares to God, "Keep to Thyself Thy Moksha, oh Lord, which is impossible for me to attain. All that I long for is worship of Thee, and what will ultimately satisfy me is communion with Thee." He seeks to worship God by singing His name which was the easy means of attaining Him. "This could be achieved

even while going through the various experiences of life and performing its various duties." To him who finds this difficult, or unattainable, Tukaram presents the beautiful illustration of "a village woman who arranges pitchers upon pitchers on her head as she goes to the water-side and yet walks with a free mind."

Having passed through various stages and experiences, Tukaram had cultivated a faith which was unshakable and which became an eternal source of bliss to him. It is indeed difficult to find a man more conscious of his weaknesses and more relentless in his self-examination than Tukaram. With a rigidity worthy of an impartial judge, he examines himself and attributes to his own sins or shortcomings his sufferings. "Why should I blame Thee when I have failed in devotion? I ask for remuneration for work shirked" he says to God. "I say I am Thine, and yet know not Thee! Alas! What kind of living is this?" "Why should people despise me if my own heart were pure? Do people turn away their noses from the fragrance of sandal wood?" Again, he says to God, "I cannot hold Thee responsible, oh Lord. Wretched as I am, I have not served Thee," and again, "There can be no blame attaching to Thy generosity. It is we that are faithless." Tukaram began his spiritual life with a feeling of uncertainty and doubt about God's mercifulness to common people who have to live a life of hardship. On many occasions he felt that God was unkind and did not listen to his prayers. He complains, "I have meditated on Thee day and night. Why dost thou test me thus? See how passionately I entreat Thee. Canst Thou not have mercy in Thy heart?" By constant experience and meditation, however, he gradually realised that it was wrong to doubt God's mercy, and found out that the fault lay with him. The end he reached was a calm "realisation wherein he looked upon god as merciful," from whom no suppliant turns away in despair, and "found everlasting comfort in acknowledging that he belonged to God." He found an assurance in the conviction that "God who is the mother and father of all never intends anything ill for His children." His faith in God and his spiritual attainments reached their crowning glory in the Abhanga which is among the best he has composed and which begins with the lines:—

“Where go I, there art Thou
Leading me, taking me by the hand.”

In this Abhanga Tukaram pours out the calm resignation of his will to the will of God and in that beautiful experience he feels comforted that God is not only our main-stay as we proceed on the path of life, but bears our burdens as He walks by our side. In that realisation, again, the folly of his utterances becomes wisdom and his timidity yields place to fortitude. It transforms all men into beloved comrades and makes them supremely happy in bliss, both external and internal. Fortified with this faith, Tukaram goes so far as to declare to God boldly, “Keep me where Thou wouldst. Do Thou unto me whatever Thou wouldst. Whenever it is and Whatever it may be, I shall live in happiness.”

In another and an equally memorable Abhanga, Tukaram states what, according to him, constitutes a saint. “He who calls his own the weary and the afflicted....Do thou know him to be a saint, and do thou find God residing in him.” The highest conception of a saint according to him is one who is pure in heart, for, he declares, “He whose heart is pure, in him dwells Vishwambhara,” This is a conception rarely to be found in the teachings of other masters. That Tukaram himself had reached that lofty ideal of manhood is revealed by many an incident, too true to be doubted, narrated in the story of his life.

In the above paragraphs an attempt is made to bring together in a very brief survey some of the essential features of Tukaram's religion and his message as it is revealed in his Abhangas. The attempt is a feeble one, for, the beauty and richness of Tukaram's Abhangas lose much of their charm and appeal in an English rendering. The grandeur of Tukaram's spiritual wealth can be appreciated in its fulness only in the original Abhangas which he composed in Marathi. Moreover, this wealth is so vast and varied showing not only the devotee offering his all at the feet of his Lord, but a poet possessing rare literary talent, that one must read all the Abhangas so that one may enjoy him and learn at his feet to the fullest. Yet, in the above paragraphs some of his most important sayings are collected, and it is hoped that even at second hand, they may give a fairly adequate idea about Tukaram's religion. His religion, at any rate, is not at all difficult to explain or to understand.

It is summed up in one word which formed the keyword of his life—*Bhakti*. In the midst of a people whose minds were enslaved by an allegiance to ceremonies and complicated forms of worship, Tukaram discovered and revealed to others that the most simple and yet the most effective way to reach God was to worship Him in and with the heart. He was a worshipper of Panduranga, by which name is known the deity enshrined in the temple of Pandharpur. It does not mean, however, that his devotion was centred in an image that was confined to the narrow precincts of a temple. Tukaram's conception of Panduranga was in no way narrower than that of an Almighty God without shape or form and pervading all. "There is no place," he says, "anywhere which is not occupied by my Panduranga." This conception cannot apply to an image made of stone, metal or any other material. Tukaram may have begun his spiritual life with the worship of Panduranga of Pandharpur, but as he soared higher and higher, he arrived at the conviction that God does not reveal Himself to the mortal eyes, nor can He be known by standards of human reasoning. "The Vedas found themselves dumb as they sought to describe Him, and the mind and the wind were both powerless in this attempt. He whose light is reflected in the Sun and the Moon, He whom the Thousand-mouthed cannot adequately glorify—what can my poor intellect achieve?" Tukaram says this at last, "Thou art our Mother and we are Thy children." This is how Tukaram looked upon God and worshipped Him.

— G. L. C.

Just for To-day

God wills that every one of us should just take proper care of the moment as it passes, leaving it in His hands what He will do with us on the day following. That is true of all growth in us. Our spiritual growth is as much the fruit of the proper care of the moments as they pass, as our mental growth and material well-being. Time is the stuff of life. And proper use of time is to catch it as it flies and never to postpone any noble impulse to a future date to issue in action.

We are not given, in God's providence, to know what will happen tomorrow. We have no control over what has happened and gone. To plan for the distant future, without the earnestness to

work from moment to moment, is an empty aspiration. To-day this moment, is only ours. Let us use it well, not only in the sense of coining it into money, but for all things that matter more than silver and gold. That is practical religion all along the line, and that is the deepest truth of religion inwardly.

If we miss just to-day how can we hope to achieve anything in life tomorrow? From morn till eve, every day is a new opportunity for doing our very best in the task appointed for us. To-day, we must pray and meditate if we would come nearer to our God. To-day, we must practise thrift, if we would be better tomorrow. To-day, we must be honest, gentle, serviceable and truthful, if we would reap the fruit of noble conduct. To-day we must not hesitate to act for righteousness, without fear of frown and favour. To-day, we must study and discipline ourselves, if we would be wiser tomorrow. To-day we must conquer temptation, be it of indolence or dallying with any other form of sin. To-day, we must practise self-denial in small things and great, if we would stand firm like a rock, when the world spins around us and is apt to sweep us off our feet. We must practise charity and tolerance, abide by principles and cease to be trimmers, just to-day that we may not be found either fanatics or wobblers to-morrow. Milton, the great Puritan poet of England, has written, in his stately prose, about the fabric of time out of which our destiny here and hereafter is woven, thus: "Hours have wings and fly up to the author of time and carry news of our usage. All our prayers cannot entreat one of them either to return or slacken its pace. The misspents of every minute are a new record against us in heaven. Sure if we thought thus we would dismiss them with better reports, and not suffer them to fly away empty, or laden with dangerous intelligence. How happy is it when they carry up not only the message but the fruits of good, and stay with the Ancient of days to speak for us before his glorious throne."

To-morrow is the day when idlers work, and fools reform, and mortal men lay hold on Heaven. A man who would reap immortality cease to be a fool, and ~~would not be set down~~ for an idler, must pray and work and be wise just to-day. The postponement of every noble impulse till tomorrow means putting off all occasions to leave the world better than we found it. Just to-day should be the watchword of really fruitful living.

—V. N. N.

The Tongue

The tongue of the wise is health.

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life.

The tongue deviseth mischiefs, like a sharp razor working deceitfully.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue and they that love it shall eat of the fruit of it.

The words of a talebearer are as wounds; they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

Which tongue have you ?

Follow Truth. Do not Look to Number

The fact of God's endowing each individual with intellectual faculties and senses implies that he should not, like other animals, follow the examples of his fellows, but should exercise his own intellectual powers, with the help of acquired knowledge, to discern good from bad, so that this valuable divine gift should not be left useless. The followers of various religions, seeing the paucity of the number of monotheists in the world, sometimes boast that they are on the side of the majority. But it may be seen that the truth of a saying does not depend upon the multitude of sayers, and the non-reliability of a narration cannot result from the small number of its narrators. For, it is admitted by the seekers of truth, that truth is to be followed, although it is against the majority of the people. Moreover, to accept the proposition that the small number of sayers leads to the invalidity of a saying, would be a dangerous blow to all forms of religion; for in the beginning of every religion it had very few supporters, *viz.* its founder and a few sincere followers.

—Rammohan Roy.

The Ministry of Pain

The mystical experience of God is good; but better than the mystical experience is the consciousness of God that character and pure life bring. And character of the right sort comes only through practice of renunciation, in things small and great.

Pain and affliction are to be welcomed, though not sought after, because they draw out the powers of the soul and make character. See the divine opportunities they create. 'Diamond cuts diamond' so goes the saying. And pain alone conquers instincts. Blessed, blessed is pain in this light. If you cannot avoid it, do not whine or complain but bear it with fortitude and faith, as the dispensation of Providence meant for testing you and purging you clean of all undesirable instincts. The great Kunti in Mahabharata prayed that her lot might always be affliction, in order that thereby she may always remember the Lord. Hers was a true prayer, as every spiritually minded person will tell you, If you really love God and are bent upon possessing Him, then pain will bring you all the closer to Him, and thus alone will your higher nature shine forth. The mortal in us must be crushed and crucified that the immortal be made manifest. That is the lesson of the Christ-life, as it is the lesson of every noble life attuned to the will of God.

God is not to be realised in one way, but in every way. Wheresoever there is glory or greatness, there the Lord himself is manifest. Therefore, break down all walls. Cease to be insular. Be all-sided ; because your duty lies in transmuting all experience into self-perfection. To preach one idea to the exclusion of *all* others is narrowness and imperfection. Our vision of God and life must be first cleared up. Our self-conceit must be first done away with. Egoism is the great curse in religion. It is a great impediment in the path of spiritual and moral truth. Nothing blurs one's vision of God and Truth as self-conceit. Therefore, harness yourself first. Let not your mind run hither and thither. Your surface consciousness is wayward, wanton, unsteady, untutored, rebellious. Or it is weak, passive, cowardly, and inclined to take on the first impression. What is needed in spiritual life, is that you go deep down to your real being and bring it up to govern all your life. You are god at one moment and slave to passion at another. This will not do. Hence character is the test—the only test of vision. And pain and affliction are ministers unto the test and strength of character. Do not curse pain; for it is the only means of bringing out the best in man, and drawing him deep down to know and realise the real man that he is.

—V. N. N.

Death—the Beginning of Life

Death, the world thinks, is the close of all. Nay, it is the beginning of power, the flowering of love, the emancipation of life. That is the way we should look at our deed, even when we sorrow most of them. The true communion with the dead, who are alive in God, has nothing to do with the senses that deceive. It is inadvisable, immortal, imperishable, spiritual. The sacred dead are to be felt, not seen, loved in the spirit, not in the sense.

—*Stopford Brooke.*

Death is No End

I feel myself the future life. I am like a forest, which has been more than once cut down. The new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. I am rising, I know, towards the sky... Why you say the soul is nothing but the resultant of bodily powers? Why then, is my soul the more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head and eternal spring is in my heart. There I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilacs, the violets and the roses, as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me... When I go down to the grave, I can say like so many others "I have finished my day's work" but I cannot say "I have finished my life." My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley. It is a thorough-fare. It closes on the twilight to open with the dawn... The thirst for the Infinite proves Infinity.

—*Victor Hugo.*

All are Equal in the Creator's Eye

It may be seen that the followers of every religion believe that the Creator has made mankind for the performance of the duties of the present and the future life by observing the precepts of that particular religion; and that the followers of other religions, who differ from them, are liable to punishment and torment in future life. But as the members of each particular sect defer the good results of their own acts and the bad results of their rivals' acts to life after

death, none of them can refute the dogmas of others in this life. Consequently, they simply sow the seeds of prejudice and disunion in the hearts of one another, and condemn one another to the deprivation of eternal blessings : whereas it is quite evident that all of them are living in the equal enjoyment of the eternal blessings of Heaven, such as, the light of the stars, the pleasures of the season of spring, the fall of rain, the health of the body, external and internal good, etc.; and that all are equally liable to suffer from inconveniences and pains, such as darkness, the severity of cold, mental disease, narrowness of circumstances, and other outward and inward evils, without any distinction, although following different religions.

—*Rammohan Roy.*

Precepts of Life

In the pocket book of the Hon. Stephen Allen, who was drowned on board the *H. Clay*, was found a printed slip, apparently cut from a newspaper, of which the following is a copy. It is worthy to be inserted in every newspaper, and to be engraved on every young man's heart :—

1. Make few promises.
2. Always speak the truth.
3. Never speak evil of any one.
4. Keep good company or none.
5. Live up to your engagements.
6. Be just before you are generous.
7. Never play at any game of chance.
8. Drink no kind of intoxicating liquor.
9. Good character is above all things else.
10. Keep your own secrets if you have any.
11. Never borrow if you possibly can help it.
12. Keep yourself innocent if you would be happy.
13. Make no haste to be rich, if you would prosper.

14. When you speak to a person, look him in the face.
15. Do not marry until you are able to support a wife.
16. Ever live (misfortune excepted) within your income.
17. Save when you are young, to spend when you are old.
18. Never run into a debt, unless you can see a way out again.
19. Avoid temptation, through fear you may not withstand it.
20. Good company and good conversation are the sinews of virtue.
21. Small and steady gains have competency with a tranquil mind.
22. Your character cannot be essentially injured except by your own acts.
23. If any one speak evil of you, let life be so, that none will believe him.
24. When you retire to bed, think over what you have been doing during the day.
25. Never be idle, if your hands cannot be employed usefully attend to the cultivation of your mind.
26. Read over the above maxims carefully and thoughtfully at least once every week.

The True Worshipper of God

Here is a difficult problem for the candid examination of every earnest and sincere soul. How is it that amongst many who profess themselves believers and many who are regular worshippers of God, we find so few who can be called really regenerated? Why does their belief exert so little influence over their moral nature? If they are worshippers, why is not their worship sufficient unto their salvation? The defect lies in the spirit in which they believe, and the attitude of the soul with which they worship. With many it is a fashion to believe in God as an unavoidable hypothesis of creation,

or an intellectual conclusion which we cannot ignore without shutting our eyes to palpable facts. They do not seek God but reason thrusts Him upon their minds. It is a fashion with others to worship God, looking upon the act, as a good and time-honoured practice. The soul is not deeply concerned in the act. They worship Him, because they have reasoned it in their minds that worship is a duty we owe to God. But small is the number of those who feel that God is a necessity to their soul; who seek God from a deep and unquenchable thirst of the spirit, and who look upon worship not merely as a pleasant exercise, but as a momentous act in which the whole soul is concerned. Those who approach God in this thirsting spirit and hold conscious and living intercourse with Him are possessed by a divine energy, which operates on the soul as a necessary spiritual law, and imparts a new life to the moral and spiritual nature. The advent of this saving power is marked by internal and spiritual results, which may be accepted as the proofs of the dawning of this new life. In the first place, when the soul is possessed by this divine influence, we mark, as the very first consequence, the growth of the power of the faith. Doubts melt away; new light is infused into the spiritual eye, and we are confirmed in many spiritual truths, which were but dimly visible before. It was from an apprehension of this change that the ancient Rishis cried, "When the soul begins to see God, all doubts are dispelled, the fetters of the spirit are broken and the soul is liberated from the thralldom of works." The second spiritual change introduced by this divine energy is the accession of wonderful spiritual strength. The soul, that would quake with fear before the least trial, and which did not possess the strength of a straw to resist the slightest temptation, receives a new vigour which places it above those temptations. The springs of action, that were benumbed and dull, receive a new impetus, and flow out in constant and irresistible streams.

The third spiritual effect that we notice is the birth of hope, in the place of despondency. The man no more despairs about his own spiritual destiny or the destiny of the world. This advent of the divine energy brings with it perfect assurance of the ultimate success of every thing that is good or noble. Holiness no longer seems difficult of attainment, and salvation without the reach of the

soul. By some, this hope is regarded as an essential feature of true faith. The fourth spiritual result of this inward conversion is the growth of righteousness. The soul daily grows in purity and peace. The tempestuous rebellion of the passions, is vanquished, the tastes and inclinations of the mind begin to shun their wonted and unhallowed channels, and the soul begins to take delight in the contemplation of purity and holiness.

The Proper Age for a Life of Devotion

The Hindu sages of old parcelled out man's life into four stages or ashrams. The third one, that of the life in the hermitage, was mainly devoted to contemplation of and meditation on the things of the next world. It was pre-eminently the religious part of a man's life. The citizen had already given to the world a substitute or substitutes to take up his place, his part in the active work of life, and the world had no longer any claims upon him, and could no longer demand his active co-operation in helping on the wheel of life. The fourth stage was that of complete renunciation. Whatever ties might still have bound him to the world in the third stage, were in the fourth completely renounced and surrendered. But death knows not young or old, he cares not if a man's work in life be done or is yet to do. And if all religious life and practices were left till the end, so many of us would have to quit this world, without the moulding that the soul receives from such a life and practices. Wisely, therefore, did the sages not only seek to make the first two stages preparatory to the two that were to follow, but each of it, religious in itself. Every new step in life had its own sacrament, and each of the two Ashrams was sanctified by its own particular religious duties and observances. The idea, however, that dominates the mind of most men not of this country only, but all the world over, is that the last stage of life, when a man can do little else, is the time for spiritual exercises, for giving a thought to the life to come. But so many even in the old age die in harness devoted to and working hard to the utmost of the strength still left to them for the things of this world, even though in early life they might have resolved to do otherwise. In fact, they had expected and reckoned on the impossible. They had an idea that at a later stage in life they would

continue the same men that they were at an earlier stage and that they could then turn to God as easily or with only as much difficulty as they could have done earlier.

So many years of life given solely to a life of this world leave their deep impression on the soul and leave her very little if at all of whatever desire she might previously have had to love and be at one with God. Whenever, therefore, a man decides either consciously or unconsciously to devote the last stage of his life to God, he virtually decides even at that very moment to be less than what he is then. And if he desires to be greater, he must decide it even now by deciding not to leave the care of the soul to a later period of life, but to take it up at the present instant.

Wisdom Tabloids (15)

We must have a habitation—a resting place for the mind; and we must have a companion there, to speak peace to us in the “wilderness and solitary place” of our strange mysterious inner world. And who can this be but He who knows that world and who alone can rightly rule, correct, counsel and comfort the inhabitant of it?

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Few persons suspect how much mere talk fritters away spiritual strength; and how that which should be spent in action spend itself in words. He who restrains the love of talk lays us a fund of spiritual strength.

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O let my heart confess Thy power.
And find Thy sweet relief,
To brighten every gloomy hour,
And soften every grief.

* * * *

No work truly done, no word earnestly spoken, no sacrifice free made, was ever made a vain.

All that can be done in times of trial is to believe that you are before God, and to avoid all talking with the tongue or with the

thoughts. For, in yielding to words, you do but make circles, and advance not a single step.

A love of holy solitude and habitual interior recollection are essential to those who desire to restrain their minds from gadding abroad after worldly objects.

"The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing." Sickness is often the most grievous of trials, and a time when the greatest fortitude and constancy are needed. But it is also often the season in which Divine visitations of love and mercy, the most abound.

The will can only be made submissive by frequent self-denials, which must keep in subjection its sallies and inclinations. Great weakness is often produced by indulgences which seem of no importance.

The law of conscience is perfect and immutable. I am changing and imperfect. I deceive myself, but this never loses its rectitude. When I am undeceived, it is not my reason that alters and returns to the right view; but it is this inward law, which has never departed from it, recalling and forcing me to return to it.

Goodness and love mould the form into their own image, and cause joy and beauty of love to shine forth from face.

There are no other means in heaven or upon earth, to heal and content the soul, but by strengthening the soul itself.

If it be true as human wisdom has said, that, "He, who works prays," may we not also believe that he who prays, works? "To occupy oneself with God" Says St. Bernard, "is not to be idle; it is the occupation of all occupations."

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It is good, when assaulted by evil desires, to wait in stillness for the arising of something calmer and gentler than our own impulsiveness. In the mere act of waiting, this will be found gradually to arise.

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Our natural affections become more and more beautiful to me. We sometimes feel as if we had known nothing of human life till now. So it will be for ever. We shall wake up to the wonderful

and beautiful which we have overlooked and find a new creation without moving from our old haunts.

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Cast all your thoughts and cares, into the will of God, though it be an unknown will. Every moment in which the soul thus returns to God, a complete regeneration occurs.

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It is the work of the spirit of Truth to discover the first motions of evil in the heart; and this must be observed and obeyed: for that which discovers sin, is appointed to slay it.

Speak Gently

Do not express otherwise in speech what you know in thought; Do not speak such hard words as would lead men to suspicion, failing to understand the real meaning; and you should never utter a word with the purpose that men failing to realise your intention, may understand something else; What you know to be true, give that out exactly while speaking. One can address a man with hard words hurting his feelings, or it can be done in a gentle and soothing manner: the narrow-minded people use hard words; that is not proper. You should speak to all with gentleness and sympathy avoiding meanness and harsh words with the intention of hurting the feelings of any one, and should always say what is beneficial with the object of doing good to all. You should never indulge in self-praise and should not exaggerate your own works with a view to self-glorification. Do not speak ill of others. Mis-appropriating the property of others and unjustly depriving others of their good name and reputation are equally bad. If it be absolutely necessary to speak of the offence of any one for correcting him or for the good of the world, you should do so with a kind heart.

Do We Know God?

He who thinks 'I have known God well,' has known very little of God; because he has not known that the infinite God cannot be known well. Perhaps he is satisfied with the thought that God

is some object having a form; or if his thought is subtler, he thinks Him as some limited formless object like mind. He has not known that God has neither body, not mind; if He had body, He would be an object of senses; if He had mind, He would be grasped by the mind. There are many people who understand that God has no body, but they do not realise clearly that He has no mind either. They attribute to that pure absolute infinite intelligence, the function of limited mind. They think that He has anger, envy, affection compassion and partiality. If He had these virtues of mind, we would have known Him well. So, those who think, that they know Him well, attribute to him these virtues of mind; those among them who see still more grossly attribute to Him virtues of body. Mind is a subtle object beyond the reach of senses. But that who is subtler than it, has not even the virtues of mind. How can we know Him well? He who is the cause of the universe has no doubt wisdom; but is that wisdom limited like ours, can we comprehend that infinite knowledge by our finite understanding? He has created this world and is even now protecting it. So it is evident He has the power of creation and protection. But is that power limited like ours? Can we comprehend that unthinkable power in our mind? Can the love of Him who has created mercy, affection, love for the good of this world, be like the finite love of our minds? Who can fathom the unfathomable love of the true, the beautiful and the good?

Wisdom Tabloids (16)

There is nothing more vulgar, hateful and unbearable than falsehood.

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Life maintained by unfair means is really death, and death for the sake of righteousness is life indeed.

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Do not give to undeserving persons. Do not give to such persons as would spend the things received in evil ways. Make the best use of your gifts by giving to such persons as are incapable of

labour, those who have no other means of support but receiving alms, and those who cannot extricate themselves from the difficulties by their own strength.

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As physical diseases are to be removed by the use of medicine, so mental sorrows have to be remedied by remembering the Supreme Refuge.

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This world is a school for our training and not a place for enjoying continuous happiness.

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At the approach of pride, take refuge in God, in the fear that downfall is close at hand.

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There is no enemy so harmful as anger, and no malady so painful as greed. Anger and greed create cruelty. Cruelty leads men away from goodness. Anger encourages giving pain to others. Greed leads to the sacrifice of all virtues at the altar of self-aggrandisement. Such heinous crimes as theft and murder are perpetrated at the instigation of anger and greed. Therefore abandon anger and greed and be kind to all.

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He who can control his senses and mind, has no occasion to suffer pain.

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There is no malady so ugly as envy.

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Do not have inordinate desire for wealth, honour, position or anything of this world.

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Neither is happiness everlasting, nor misery. The good alone lasts for ever. God sends us happiness, wealth and prosperity, when they are good, and sorrows and difficulties when they will contribute for our welfare. Both happiness and sorrow are leading men towards the world of good.

Duty of Parents

Parents are bound by every moral tie, to give their children such an education as may be sufficient to render them capable of exercising their reason as rational and social beings, and of forming their opinion on religious points, without ill-will towards others, from a thorough investigation of the scriptures and of the evidence and arguments adduced by teachers of different persuasions.

—*Ram Mohan Roy.*

Need of Good Company

Prosperity and adversity alike cause excitement of the mind. In adversity the mind is affected in a certain way; prosperity also affects the mind, though in a different manner. Sometimes the intoxication of prosperity proves a greater obstacle in the path of righteousness than the stings of adversity. Therefore, try to reap the benefits of prosperity and adversity without being moved by them. Carefully associate with the righteous. In the world, various circumstances overtake us; these affect and disturb the mind in diverse ways; righteous aspirations may be dimmed; holy enthusiasm may be cooled down, hopes for the good may be turned into despair; life may become polluted by delusion. Under such circumstances, companionship of the good brings us back to the normal condition. By the influence of the company of saintly persons the dying soul regains new life, the hopeless recover new hope, the disheartened spirit receives new enthusiasm. As the light of the sun gives colour to the colourless things, so the goodness of holy persons infuses purity and holiness into unholy lives. The company of holy persons has this supreme virtue that it checks evil thoughts and inspires holy aspirations. Therefore, seekers after righteousness must not neglect to cultivate the companionship of holy persons.

The company of holy persons leads to spiritual progress whereas association with the wicked gives rise to delusion. The company of the good is a means of improvement and the company of the wicked persons leads to downfall. By association with the good, love and reverence for God are increased, while the company of wicked

persons draws one away from God, by giving rise to doubt and disbelief. The conversation and the behaviour of the wicked slacken the spiritual bond of the companions. Associations with the irreligious weaken the hatred towards sin and regard for righteousness. Therefore a seeker after righteousness should cultivate the company of the good, shunning that of the wicked. Keep yourself away from such persons whose companionship awakens low thoughts and desires. But never hate any one. Go everywhere with a view to carry out the beneficent purpose of God, who is the source of the pure stream of holiness, living in His constant companionship.

Preparation for the Future

One should not leave out the consideration for the future, being immersed in present happiness. One should not neglect the permanent good for the sake of what is present only for the day. A man should not spend his childhood and youth only in pleasure and merriment ; he should diligently practise the duties of childhood and youth such as acquiring knowledge and religion and the habit of industry, otherwise old age will become tedious and miserable. One should be engaged in the endeavour to increase the love for God and in works dear unto Him throughout life. That will secure a good place in the next world.

Think carefully ; if you waste the early age in the feverish pursuit of fleeting pleasures, when old age will come, the body will become feeble and the senses worn out, there will be no hope of peace and rest. Consider, if you are engaged all your life in the thoughtless pursuits of worldly pleasures as if these were the be-all and end-all of life, if you cannot acquire knowledge, righteousness and purity, how painful it will be when you will have to leave this world and go to a place where you cannot take with you the things of this world ; because you have not with you the things necessary there.

Wisdom Tabloids (17)

The unfortunate man, whose mind is not under control, is led astray from the right path and is dragged into the thorny forest of sin, where he suffers from endless torment. Therefore the mind and

senses should not be allowed to go beyond the control of the understanding and the discipline of Moral Laws.

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Speaking the truth and truthful behaviour, are the very life of Brahmoism. Those who desire to attain God who is Truth must never depart from Truth. The person devoted to God should always be eager to perform righteous deeds as ordained by the God of Righteousness in truth and love. Without righteous conduct the heart does not become pure, the grace of God is not obtained and divine knowledge is not revealed.

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Performance of duty is righteousness or Religion. Doing duty to one's own self, duty to parents, duty to wife and children, to friends and neighbours, duty to master, duty to the poor, the distressed and the helpless, duty to one's own country and to God, is Religion.

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Always aim at truth, make your mind obedient to truth, let your speech correspond to truth and your conduct be subservient to truth.

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Hypocrisy and jealousy should be avoided; show of righteous behaviour is hypocrisy and envy at the good of others is jealousy.

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One should speak only that which does not conceal the truth and at the same time gives rise to pleasantness, and one should carefully learn to speak in such a manner. One should keep back that which is true, but hurts the feelings of others and should not be spoken unless necessary for the sake of righteousness; if absolutely necessary, one should tell it with compassion; one should not delight in it; the pleasant, if untrue, should be absolutely averted. Such restraint of speech should always be practised.

Ananda Mohan Bose

(1887-1906)

In the latter half of the nineteenth century India produced quite a galaxy of men eminent in the different walks of life but none of them attained the eminence of Ananda Mohan Bose who was



Ananda Mohan Bose

pre-eminently great in all the walks of life. As a legal luminary, as a politician and statesman, as a social reformer and educationist, as a constitutionalist and religious reformer, he easily outshone all his contemporaries. He served the country to the best of his ability and that was indeed extraordinary. His university career was a brilliant one, he being the first Indian Wrangler, but the records of his public service was even more brilliant. He stood in the foremost rank of India's public life in all its various aspects for close upon a quarter of a century. He had the confidence of both the rulers and the ruled—a rare privilege at all times. He was first nominated to the Bengal Legislative Council and then elected by the people. He founded the Indian Association which did splendid political work before the Indian National Congress was founded in 1885. He was chosen President of the National Congress which held its sittings in Madras in 1903. His presidential address, it is admitted on all hands, was one of the ablest and easily the most eloquent. The present writer vividly remembers the great speech he made before a packed house in the Novelty Theatre when a meeting to welcome him home from his tour in England was held under the presidency of that lion of a politician—Sir Pherozsha Mehta. Ananda Mohan reached the zenith of his all-round career in comparatively young age and he remained at it without effort till death snatched him away at the age of fiftynine! His last public act was to preside over a mammoth meeting in Calcutta, of more than a lakh of people, held to lay the foundation-stone of the Federation Hall after the unjust and cruel partition of Bengal by the Government of Lord Curzon. He was ailing at that time but he thought it his duty as a patriot to give his parting message to his people. He was carried in a sedan chair to the presidential seat and there he made the last of his speeches. The seething mass of surging humanity who listened to him was awfully excited but Ananda Mohan was as unruffled and as peaceful as ever.

What was it that gave Ananda Mohan the wonderful power, sagacity, earnestness of purpose, tenacity of will and balance of judgment which characterised all that he undertook? What was it that made his the most unique personality of his times? What was it that combined in him to produce a harmonious development of a perfect manhood? There may have been many factors which led

to this beautiful result, but we doubt not that the foremost of them all was his religion. He was a man who would not for the world defy his conscience but would follow its dictates however painful the result. He was one of the twenty young men initiated by Keshub Chunder Sen into Brahmoism. He had great personal regard and reverence and affection for the Brahmanand. But when the time came to separate from him, when he felt impelled to do so on account of difference of ideal he did so with a bleeding heart. To Ananda Mohan Bose, religion and conscience were all in all and in all his fights whether for the vindication of the principles of liberty and equality, or in fights with the foreign Government, or with his own people he made them his only and supreme guides.

Ananda Mohan had spent a number of years at Cambridge and had come in contact with the noblest and the best that was in English life. He had seen the noble results of constitutionalism and had come to India with a deep love for the ordered form of Government by the people for the people. His long and arduous work in connection with Education and politics is well known and needs no re-iteration here. It was his innate love of constitutionalism that helped him to put the newly founded Sadharan Brahmo Samaj on a sound constitutional basis.

There was hardly a field of labour for the good of the motherland which Ananda Mohan did not touch. But all his work whether social or political was done in a spirit of religion. Religion was the breath of his life. He considered himself to be a servant of God. His own definition of a servant of God was:—A servant of God has his distinctive features which mark him out from others. . He is sweet, he emits sweet fragrance, he speaks sweet music, his company is sweet, soothing, fascinating." No wonder a friend once remarked:—Mr. Bose never speaks without pouring out honey." Did he not succeed in moulding his character in accordance with his own definition?

Ananda Mohan was a simple and gentle man. His position as an eminent Advocate, his greatness as a constitutionalist and politician, his unparalleled success as a social worker, his fame as an outstanding Educationist, none of these singly or all together would take away an iota from his wonderful humility. He hated keeping himself in lime-light unnecessarily. Some people love

honour and position for their own sake. Ananda Mohan did not do it. After working as Secretary of the Indian Association in its infancy he resigned to make room for others. So also he insisted on retiring from the presidentship of the Sadharam Brahmo Samaj after he had served in that position for two years.

Ananda Mohan was a believer in Democracy, not in politics only but in all spheres of activity. Like Ram Mohan and Ranade he believed in the divine connection of England with India. He thought that in the long run the innate sense of justice of the Englishman would prevail and India would attain Swaraja under the British aegis.

We may close with an extract from his biography by Dr. Hemchandra Sirkar. Says he :—No epithet expresses his character so well as that he was a *modern rishi* one who lived and moved and had his being in the constant consciousness of God; one who lived every moment of his life before his task master's eye, one who had consecrated his body, mind and soul to the service of the Lord. Mr. A. M. Bose was a *rishi* of the old type transplanted to the new surroundings and new circumstances of the nineteenth century. Work and worship came equally naturally to him." Thus did Ananda Mohan exemplify in himself the ideal of the Theistic Church of India.

—V. S. S.

God has no Form

Body is an instrument. It is an effect. God has not the instrument of body. He is not subject to such an instrument. He is not the effect of any cause. Everything is His effect. He is the sole cause. He has neither body nor senses. At the same time, He does everything and knows everything. He is the one Lord of all. None is equal or superior to Him. He is the creator of all. All else are created beings. He is the King of the great Kingdom of the universe. All else are His subjects. He is our supreme Father. We are all His children. He is our Master; we are servants subject to His command. All are under His law, and come into being and disappear according to law. Whether it be the astronomer's watching the movement of the heavenly bodies, or the geologist's searching the strata of the earth or the physiologist's

studying the Laws of the body or the physicist's enquiry into the Laws of Matter or the philosopher's studying the subtle Laws of the mind,—all declare His wonderful and inscrutable power. The tale of His great power is heard from them all everywhere. We know by observing with our senses and then thinking over the observed facts by a chain of arguments by the help of our understanding. But God's knowledge is not like ours. We exercise our strength to the muscles of our body, but the action of God's might is not so. He knows all naturally by His power and performs His benevolent purpose by His own unaided will. He has not to depend upon anything else like the senses to know something, nor does He require any instrument to exercise His power. The action of His knowledge and power is natural. How wonderful is the knowledge of Him, from whom have been born these innumerable intelligent creatures! How great is the power of Him from whom all these beings have been born and have received their respective powers!

Overcome Evil with Good

Do what will bring about good. God is good and He aims at goodness. What is beneficent for one person but not so for another, and similarly what is beneficent for to-day, but not so tomorrow, is not truly beneficent. Engage yourself in that which is beneficent for all men and for all times. Do not act sinfully towards a sinner; if any one acts unjustly, do not act unjustly in return. Always remain good; overcome evil by goodness. Remedy injustice by walking in the path of justice. The wicked seek to satisfy their anger; but the good aim at spreading peace in the world by their teaching the wicked by the example of their own goodness.

Wisdom Tabloids (18)

Knowledge of Truth means to know things as they are; created things should not be mistaken for the Creator. One should be able to discriminate between truth and untruth, good and evil, righteousness and unrighteousness. To this end one should seek knowledge and act up to that knowledge.

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The elder brother should be looked upon as the father, the younger brother should be loved as the son, the wife and children should be considered as a part of one's own self and servants should be treated kindly. One should not treat anybody cruelly, blinded with anger on seeing any shortcoming, but should try to correct him with forgiveness. In imitation of the incomparable love with which God is tending all, one should protect intellectual and spiritual welfare of every member of the family.

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The genuine affection of the parents, the unselfish friendship of the bosom friends, the pure love of the devoted wife is but the shadow of God's love.

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Know the Truth with a peaceful mind and having known the Truth, follow its path; then you will triumph with the triumph of Truth. If you want to attain God, then take refuge in Truth and leave off falsehood and hypocrisy. The Infinite God who is the supreme source of Truth can be attained by the concentration of mind and by perfection of knowledge.

The All-pervading God

As the birds cover their young ones by their wings and thus protect them from various dangers, so the entire world is covered and thus protected by God. He is the King and Lord of the universe. He is our father, protector and friend. His rule extends over all and His love is manifested everywhere; discarding evil thoughts and greed of earthly pleasures, obtain (the friendship of) that Beloved and enjoy the consequent supreme bliss. As the human body has its various derangements, so the derangement of the mind is sin. As a diseased person has no appetite for food, so one who commits sin has no desire for enjoying the bliss of God, therefore having discarded evil thoughts and sinful actions, one should keep his mind healthy and pure and enjoy divine bliss. A wicked and guilty man can never love his father, nor can he realise his father's love towards him. He is constantly afraid of his (father's) rule; likewise a sinful person having overstepped the

bridge of righteousness, established by the supreme father, receives the just punishment and remains constantly morose. How can he moisten his impure, unsteady, disquieted and disturbed mind by realising the peaceful, holy and righteous nature of God? Therefore one who is desirous of attaining God must give up greed of worldly pleasures, he must entirely desist from evil thoughts, evil talk and evil actions: he should not deal unjustly with others, should not turn evil (lustful) eyes on the wives of others, should not covet the wealth of others.

Thy need is Greater than Mine

Sadhu Hiranand served the poor people to the best of his power, even to the point of risking his life continually. Once there arose a very bad type of cholera in Hyderabad (Sind) and one day Hiranand returned late at night after attending a poor patient. While he was beginning to take his late supper, there came another man who asked him to go and visit a poor relation of his who was suffering from the same fell disease. Hiranand rose to go when he was asked by his brother to take his meal and then go or he might, being hungry, catch the disease more easily, when Hiranand replied in a most characteristic manner, saying that it was only a possibility of his taking the disease and dying therefrom, whereas, the man was actually suffering from it and dying, and immediately went to tend him.

Two Kinds of War

War is of two kinds. The wicked fight for unjustly taking possession of that in which they have no right. It amounts to hostility against the God of righteousness; this is not righteous war. But the war, which is undertaken to establish the throne of righteousness in order to prevent the reign of unrighteousness, is called the defensive or righteous war; it remedies injustice and defends justice. But even this is not to be a little deplored in the kingdom of God who is Love. That men, who are the children of the One Beneficent Father and are tended in His equal affection, who should embrace each other in mutual love, should pollute their hands

with the blood of each other,—that one brother would inflict deadly blow on the body of another—is too sad and deplorable to think of; therefore war should never be resorted to if justice can be obtained by peace and forgiveness, and self-aggrandisement should not be indulged in, in the pretext of a righteous war; but when engaged in a righteous war for the prevention of unrighteousness, one should not turn away from it in fear.

Wisdom Tabloids (19)

One should gratefully bestow his love and gratitude on his parents who tend and protect us in affection as the very image of Love of the Beneficent God and as His representative, and the preceptor by whose teachings we attain the Infinite, Eternal, Unchanging God, having been liberated from the darkness of ignorance.

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One should engage in beneficent action having in view the beneficent purpose of God who is the abode of all goodness and should never commit evil works.

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One should not become a mendicant having cut off the relationship with mother, father, brothers, sisters, wife, children and members of the family. This relationship has been instituted by the Beneficent God; it is not proper to cut it off. One should preserve this relationship as a house-holder.

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One should perform works dear unto the Beloved God, out of love for Him and in complete indifference to the consequences. To obey His command in happiness or in misery, in weal or woe, in honour or dishonour should be the one aim of the devotee.

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It is our uncommon good fortune that, though imperfect, deluded and sin-stricken creatures, we can know that immutable, sinless, perfect, true and holy person. But to know Him, supreme effort and earnest desire are necessary. As a thirsty deer seeketh

after the water (of the brook), so should one seek that uncreated, immortal, eternal truth with a desire to attain Him.

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What possibility is there of attaining the dear God, if we know Him but do not taste the pure joy of spiritual communion with Him and of concentrating the mind in Him, if we do not become worthy of His companionship by elevating and purifying our character, though we know Him to be great and pure, if we do not walk in the path of righteousness shown by Him, though we know Him to be the Lord and Regulator (of the universe) and seek our own selfish ends throughout our life.

Asceticism

The ascetic feeling may arise from various conditions of mind. A man may be unable, from weakness of heart, to bear troubles, sorrows and dangers of a worldly life and may wish to fly away from them, and lead the life of an ascetic. You may sympathize with such a man, but can never admire him. This is the asceticism of fear. Then, again, a man may have suffered many sorrows, have withstood several trials, gone through various dangers, but seeing that this life is a life of misery, that it inflicts cruel wounds on the most tender parts of his heart, that happiness and quiet are not to be obtained here, wishes to leave it and enter upon a life of self-discipline and tranquil meditation. This may be called the asceticism of despair. But the ascetic feeling may be induced not by the miseries of life but by the hopes of a higher and holier life—a life of everlasting purity and bliss. A man may be afraid of a worldly life or may not have succumbed to the troubles and sorrows he has borne, but may set a low value on worldly enjoyments, consider them to be sinful and debasing, and casting them off as worthless, may wish to rise higher and devote himself entirely to such exercises and such contemplation as he may think necessary for the attainment of eternal bliss. These two states of mind, but more markedly the latter, are at the root of the asceticism enjoined and practised by the Buddhists, and the Vedantic Pantheists. But though setting a low value on worldly enjoyments and considering them as sinful and debasing equally with these, a man may believe the world to be a proper school of discipline,

and far from wishing to renounce it, choose to live in it, and then attempt to realize a life of holiness in the midst of sin, of joy and peace, in the midst of sorrow and trouble, of contemplation or divine communion in the midst of worldliness and mammon worship and thus to qualify himself for a higher life. For, says the Mahabharat:—
 “A wise man though living in the midst of worldly enjoyment does not really live amongst them, while a fool though living far from them, does really live among them.” And also:—

“Why, pray, to forests wild repair,
 There war against thy senses wage?
 Where dwells the self-subduing sage,
 The wood, the hermit’s cell, is there.”

Forget not Righteousness

Do not be elated with joy at pleasant events; nor be immersed in misery and unpleasant ones. Both excessive joy and sorrow affect the faculty of discrimination. The man without discrimination, failing to realise what should be done and what should not, falls a victim to many evils. Having realised God as the source of all, be humble at the time of prosperity and in the hour of adversity. Try to remedy it in obedience to the law of righteousness. Whatever unpleasant events are inevitable they should be borne with patience. It should also be borne in mind that what we consider desirable may not be beneficial and what we dread as undesirable, may be really beneficial. Weak-minded people try to earn their livelihood by resorting to unfair means when confronted with poverty. But they forget that what looks as means of liberation from suffering, may in the end bring dire distress. Therefore, even if this easily perishable physical frame is about to be broken with the burden of suffering, do not pollute the soul by forsaking righteousness.

Mission of the Brahmo Samaj

It is the mission of the Brahmo Samaj to foster both individuality and spirituality—to advocate liberty of conscience—to

establish the Supremacy of the human conscience on the one hand—and to bring men and women to God and to righteousness on the other—to lay the basis of all reforms, whether social, educational or political, in the Spiritual life of the race. —S. N. S.

Prof. N. G. Welinkar

As a friend and admirer I consider it a privilege and duty to pay my humble tribute of admiration to this great and noble soul. My contact with Prof. Welinkar commenced about 45 years ago, when I sat at his feet, as an humble pupil, and as days rolled on, this contact developed into a close and lasting friendship. His mere company was an education itself, to any one. He was one of the most brilliant products of the Bombay University of which he was a Fellow and an Examiner for several years, even after he had severed his connection with Bombay. He occupied with distinction the Chair of Professor of Latin and English in the Wilson College and earned the devotion and love of his pupils, through his efficiency and his almost parental kindness, and child-like simplicity. He led a very active life and was the Founder of several cultural institutions in Bombay, such as 'The Dadabhoy Nowroji Poor-Boys' Seminary' in memory of a great and noble servant of India. This institution imparted vocational training which is one of the burning topics of the day. Prof. Welinkar hit upon this idea, in the early eighties, so that he may well be considered as the pioneer of vocational Education in Bombay.

He established 'The Union High School' where he commenced the novel experiment of imparting co-education, somewhat to the dismay of the orthodox public. He successfully conducted it for several years and as Principal, imparted to the students high and moral ideas.

About fifteen years before this, with the co-operation of some earnest educationists of the town he established the "Bombay Students' Brotherhood". Gradually it drew widespread attention, and came to have a great hold on the student-world and the educated public of Bombay. The Brotherhood carried on several useful



Prof. N. G. Welinkar

activities which it is unnecessary to enumerate at length, the present writer being closely connected with it for many years as its Honorary Secretary.

He then turned his attention to the establishment of the Brahmo Samaj at Hyderabad (Deccan), where he came to be domiciled in the latter part of his life. In order to collect funds for the erection of a Brahmo Samaj Mandir he made an extensive tour and his labours were crowned with splendid success,—his sincerity for the cause being unquestioned, no difficulty was experienced in the collection of funds.

All those who know Prof. Welinkar, know him as a self-made man. The distinction and popularity he has attained, he owes solely to himself. His activities are varied. He is an erudite scholar, a profound thinker, a facile writer and a finished and impressive speaker, being meticulous in the treatment of his subjects. His utterances are, consequently, listened to by crowds of students with rapt attention.

Prof. Welinkar paid two visits to England, where he spent his time studying various Educational and other Institutions and contracting friendship of many people of culture and distinction. On his return from England, he delivered a series of lectures on his "English Impressions" which were much appreciated and are still remembered. They have been printed in a book-form. His masterly Expositions on "Shakespeare" in the Students' Brotherhood weekly classes, which bore the stamp of deep erudition are equally remembered. In England, he had several conferences with Lord Morley, the then Secretary of State for India.

Whilst at the Wilson College, Prof. Welinkar's deep study of the Bible led him to embrace Christianity, but later on his opinions changed and he joined the Prarthana Samaj, Bombay, in 1905. Once when he was a Christian, a fanatical youth made a murderous assault on him for having left Hinduism and the consequent injury to his head prevented him from work for a short time.

For several years Prof. Welinkar was the Secretary of the Schools' Committee of the Bombay Municipality, but he resigned the post and proceeded to Lahore as the Principal of the Dayal

Singh College, which post he held for several years with great credit and made himself very popular among the students and the general public.

His services were subsequently requisitioned by the Educational Department of the Hyderabad State, where he served with considerable distinction, right up to his retirement, which was brought about early by his continued ill-health. Mr. Welinkar had recently a serious misfortune in the death of his wife who most cheerfully helped her husband in all his activities and nursed him devotedly in his long illness.

It may be stated without exaggeration that Prof. Welinkar although not a great man as the word is generally understood, is one who has dedicated his life to the welfare and advancement of his fellowmen, without distinction of creed or colour. Because of his purity and sincerity of life and self-effacing spirit, the Poet's lines

" His life was gentle, and the elements,
So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up,
And say to all the world 'THIS IS A MAN'

are truly applicable to him.

—B. S. T.

Making the Most of Life

According to the teachings of Jesus Christ, we can make the most of our life only by losing it. There is a lower self that must be trampled down and trampled to death by the higher self. True living is then a succession of battles, in which the better triumphs over the worse, the spirit over the flesh. Until we cease to live for self we have not begun to live at all.

We can never become truly useful and helpful to others until we have learnt this lesson. One may live for self and yet do many pleasant things for others; but one's life can never become the greatest blessing to the world it was meant to be, until the law of self-sacrifice has become its heart-principle.

We must die to be useful,—to be truly a blessing. Jesus put this truth in a little parable, when he said that the seed must fall into the earth and die that it may bear fruit. Christ's own cross is the

highest illustration of this. In heart and spirit we must all do the same if we would be a real blessing in the world. We must be willing to lose our life, to sacrifice our self, to give up our own way, our own ease, our own comfort, possibly even our life, for there come times when one's life must literally be lost in order to be saved.

It was at Fredericksburg, after a bloody battle. Hundreds of Union soldiers lay wounded on the field. All night and all next day the space was swept by artillery from both armies, and no one could venture to the sufferers' relief. All that time too there went up from the field agonising cries for water; but there was no response save the roar of the guns. At length, however, one brave fellow behind the ramparts felt that he could endure these piteous cries no longer. His compassion rose superior to his love of life. "General", said he to his commander, "I can't stand this. I ask permission to carry them water." Provided with a supply of water, the brave soldier stepped over the wall and went on his Christ-like errand. From both sides wondering eyes looked on as he knelt by the nearest sufferer and, gently raising his head, held the cooling cup to his parched lips. At once the Union soldiers understood what the soldier in grey was doing for their own wounded comrades, and not a shot was fired. For an hour and a half he continued his work, giving drink to the thirsty, straightening cramped and mangled limbs tenderly as a mother would do to the child, and all the while, until this angel-ministry was over, the fusillade of death was hushed.

Think of the heroism that led this brave soldier in grey so utterly to forget himself for the sake of doing a deed of mercy to his enemies. There is something Christly in it. How poor, paltry, and mean alongside the records of such deeds appear men's selfish strivings, self-interest's boldest venturings! There is more of grandeur in five minutes of such self-renunciation than in a whole life-time of self-interest and self-seeking.

We must all get the same spirit in us if we would become in any large and true sense a blessing to the world. We must die to live. We must lose our life to save it. We must lay self on the altar to be consumed in the fire of love, in order to glorify God and do good to men. Our work may be fair, even though mingled with self; but it is only when self is sacrificed, burned on the altar of

consecration, consumed in the hot flames of love, that our work becomes really our best, a fit offering to be made to our King.

We must not fear that in such sacrifice, in such renunciation and annihilation of self, we shall lose ourselves. God will remember every deed of love, every forgetting of self, every emptying out of life. Though we work in obscurest places, where no human tongue shall ever voice our praise, still there is a record kept, and some day rich and glorious reward will be given. *Is not God's praise better than man's? Is not that sufficient?*

Ungathered beauties of a bounteous earth,
Wild-flowers which grow on mountain paths, untrod,
White lilies looking up to God
From solitary tarns; and human worth
Doing meek duty that no glory gains,
Heroic souls in secret places sown,
To live, to suffer, and to die unknown :
Are not that loveliness and all these pains
Wasted?

Alas, then does it not suffice
That God is on the mountain, by the lake,
And in each simple duty, for whose sake
His children give their very blood as price?

The father sees. If this does not repay what else?

We may keep our life, if we will, carefully preserving it from waste, but we shall have then no reward, no honour from it at the last. But if we empty it out in loving sacrifice, we shall make it a lasting blessing to the world, and our Father will know this, and remember us. Do we need anything more? —*Adapted from Miller.*

Sorrow

Events causing sorrow and grief come continuously in this world. Weak-minded people suffer much pain, being overpowered with grief and are thus deprived of wisdom, wealth, health and beauty on the approach of such events. Therefore let not excessive

grief possess the mind. When sorrowful events come, guard yourself with patience and wisdom. Every event has some lesson for us; therefore do not be deprived of that lesson by being overpowered with grief. Much of grief is the result of our own action; therefore without being overpowered by it, try to correct your own faults. The companionship of the God of Bliss, who constantly dwells in the temple of the heart is the best medicine for all griefs. Get rid of all griefs by contemplating on Him and confessing sorrows to Him and praying for peace unto Him, live a cheerful life on this earth.

Vain Utterance of God's name

How often does the name of God come lightly to the lips of many, but how very few realise what wonderfully great meaning the little word conveys? God means our father, our mother, our all in all. He means the fountain and the flow of life. The name of God is not something to be trifled with; as soon as one takes it, he ought to become filled with a sense of gratitude and love. The feeling of an eternal life coloured with acts of love and tenderness and marked all along the line by evidences of progress, must manifest itself in every man when the word God escapes his mouth. "Thou shalt not take the name of thy God in vain" is a commandment which has a great force in it. The habit of taking God's name in vain grows—perhaps unconsciously, upon us and while our heart is in things where it should not be, we repeat the holy name of God and we imagine that we have acquired immense merit. But no, there is not only no merit in this, but we have learnt to trifle with the holiest object in and out of this world—our God who wants no repetition from us of His name, but who wants us to give Him our heart. —V. S. S.

True Love

One of the numerous functions of religion is to engender in us a genuine love for our fellow-creatures. We all love our own people, our father, mother and children, but if our love stopped there and did not stretch itself further on, it would not be wrong to conclude that the fountain of religion has ceased to flow in us and has become stagnant. Love ought to know no bounds, it must spread from the

family to the country and from that to humanity at large. The power of love ought to continually enlarge till it succeeds in bringing under its influence, not only the whole of humanity, but what is of infinitely greater importance, Him who is the author and protector of that humanity. A whole-hearted love of God means loving His works, His justice, His mercy and filling ourselves with these qualities. The more our love of God increases, the more shall we love our brethren and thus shall obtain that blessing which comes of the consciousness of having united our own interests with those of our fellow-creatures, our brothers and sisters in this world.—V.S.S.

Good for Evil

Beside a sandal-tree a woodman stood,
 And swung the axe; and, as the strokes were laid
 Upon the fragrant trunk, the generous wood
 With its own sweets perfumed the cruel blade.
 Go thou, and do the like; a soul endued
 With light from heaven, a nature pure and great,
 Will place its highest bliss in doing good,
 And good for evil give, and love for hate.
 —*Wm. Cullen Bryant.*

Wisdom Tabloids (20)

This great Beneficent Person has not tied us to the world like beasts, by giving us only sensual pleasures, but He has made us free by giving us priceless religion. He has instituted the law of righteousness with a view to give us supremely pure peace, self-contentment which is thousand times superior to worldly pleasures. He is constantly vouchsafing unto our soul noble aspirations and moral strength. By His favour we have become entitled to salvation by being free in the strength of righteousness.

* * * *

Let us meditate on the adorable wisdom and power of the Supreme Deity, the Creator of the universe who is sending unto us the faculties of knowledge.

* * * *

Know that Immortal Person and love Him above all even more than yourself : then the fear of death will end for you. He who has known God and constantly lives in the company of God, has overcome the world even while here and has been liberated from the clutches of death.

* * * *

O creatures ! arise, awake from the slumber of ignorance and having secured excellent teachers, receive knowledge from them. The wise have called this path as difficult to tread on (to walk on) as the edge of a sharpened razor.

* * * *

The one God dwells secretly in all things; He is all-pervading and is the inmost spirit of all beings. He superintends all actions and is the refuge of all creatures. He is the Consciousness, the *Witness* and is without any associate and is above all qualities found in created beings.

* * * *

As the sun illuminating all things manifests itself, so the one God is revealed in His creation; He has no creator or revealer. He is self-created, self-revealed. He has supplied sound to air, heat to fire, coolness to water, strength to thunderbolt, speed to feet, sight to eye, agreeableness in rain, light to the stars and to all others, their special features.

* * * *

A Self-faithful Life

What is the work of religion ? It is to make a man lead a *self-faithful* life. All his professions of love to God and man, of truth and justice, of equality and brotherhood are vain if he is not faithful to his own self. To be faithful to one's self is to listen to and act according to the voice of God that utters its warning note in each human heart. Joining a public body and giving expression to one's conviction in public are merely so many ways of helping the self to be faithful to itself. A man joins a church. It is an outward sign of his religious convictions and it is a help to him to keep fast by those convictions. A man joins a Temperance Association and this act

serves as a gentle reminder to him of the evils of drink and helps to keep him in the right path. But these are external helps only. The real assistance must come from within—from the heart—and when it does come it must be accepted at once. "To thine own self be true". And this is the religion for the acquisition of which man ought to strive. Saint Tukaram lays down that, that man is worthy of our worship who acts as he speaks, or in other words who does not prove false to himself. Those who profess to believe in certain doctrines of religion, but who for some reason or the other do not act up to their professions and in spite of the consciousness of their weakness bring forth excuses in justification of their conduct are persons who try to deceive others as well as themselves. In them religion has not yet found a resting place for itself. Let them examine their own hearts and attempt with humble prayer to God to make them fit for its abode.

—V. S. S.

The External Eye

It is inconvenient for people not to have wings; is not it? If however, they invent aeroplanes, these take the place of wings. The same is true regarding the external eyes. If they go blind, it is simply a matter of inventing internal sight. My God is light itself. Even though every outward thing is shrouded in darkness, in the inner chamber of my soul, God's eternal light shines on.

It is God who is bringing me to birth. Here lies the reason for this long blindness. This is the purpose back of this wearisome confinement. I am being born, born of God. God has some great expectation regarding me. I must not give way to despair, because of pain and sorrow. God is bearing me in His womb.

—*Toyohiko Kagawa.*

Bhai Prakash Dev

Bhai Prakash Dev, the well-known Brahmo Missionary was born on the 26th of March 1855 and was known as Lala Devichand in his younger days. It was his father's intention to give business training to his son and he was therefore disinclined to send him to school. He had, however, to yield to the insistence of one of his



Bhai Prakash Dev

relatives and Bhaiji was able to have school education. His scholastic career was a bright one and he passed the Matriculation Examination with credit in 1879. He joined the Government College, but had to discontinue his studies as his father would not allow him to continue, on account of Bhaiji's radical views regarding social and religious matters, which he had imbibed while in school under the influence of Pandit Satyanand Agnihotri, afterwards known as *Devguru Bhagwan* the founder of the Dev Samaj. After leaving college, Bhaiji got an appointment in the Railway service.

While in service, he continued studying religious books and attending religious meetings and lectures. He often paid his respect to his old teacher, Pandit Agnihotri, who had now taken to *Sanyas* (Asceticism.) Bhaiji's office was transferred to Rawalpindi, where in collaboration with the late Babu Abinash Chunder Mozamdar, he had started a self-improvement club, which was afterwards turned into a Prarthana Samaj. They invited Pandit Agnihotri there and his lectures and discourses created a great stir. Bhaiji was specially impressed by his talks. Once when on a visit to the Panditji at Lahore, the Panditji asked him two questions. (1) Have you seen God? (2) Do you love him more than anything else? These questions led Bhaiji to serious thinking and completely changed his whole course of life.

In 1886, the railway office was again shifted to Lahore and Bhaiji's attachment to Pandit Agnihotri grew stronger and stronger, day by day. In September 1887, his wife died, and though his father insisted on his performing the funeral rites in the orthodox manner, Bhaiji refused to do so. In August 1888, he married a Bengali Brahmin widow and it being an inter-caste marriage, it created a tremendous sensation.

In the same year, Pandit Agnihotri had seceded from the Brahmo Samaj and established the *Dev Samaj* with more or less the same ideals as those of the Brahmo Samaj. Bhaiji became a regular member of this Samaj and was later on made an *Upadeshak* (Preacher). Since then he began to devote all his leisure to the services of his *Guru* and his *Samaj*.

On the first of January 1892, Bhaiji gave up his service and all secular work to devote all his time and energies to the service of his Church. Gradually he noticed a change in the ideals of the

founder of the *Dev Samaj*. The founder put some questions to his followers regarding their attitude towards him and his family. Bhaiji's answers to them were found to be rather too frank and bold. This annoyed the *Dev Guru* and his attitude towards Bhaiji underwent a great change. Bhaiji had made great sacrifices for his ideal and he would rather lose his life than give up his principles. He severed his connection with the *Dev Samaj* which had become a purely atheistic body with the *Dev Guru Bhagwan* as its sole head. The same year, he joined the Brahmo Sadhanashram which was started at Calcutta by the great Brahmo leader, Pandit Shivrath Shastri. He worked at Arrah and Bankipore under very trying circumstances. His frequent mission tours and the tremendous amount of brain work, he had to do, undermined his constitution. In spite of his physical disability, however, he visited a number of places in the Punjab and other provinces and delivered scores of lectures and discourses, visited thousands of people and wrote a large number of useful books in Urdu. He was an all round worker. He would visit the sick, help the poor, write books, sell theistic literature, collect subscriptions for *Samaj* work and do any kind of work which, in his opinion, would help to uplift humanity. It can be said without any fear of contradiction that he was a unique missionary with perfect faith in God and His Dispensation.

The fell disease from which he suffered gave him intense pain, but he bore it with wonderful fortitude. A number of his books were written in the latter part of nights when, owing to intense pain, he could get no sleep.

Bhaiji died on the 19th of December 1919 at Lahore and his death removed from the Punjab—nay from the whole of India, a most earnest worker in the cause of the liberal religion. His life of piety and simplicity had succeeded in attracting many a young man to the Brahmo Samaj.

—*Rai Saheb Raghunath Sahai.*

Deeds and not Words

What is the use of religion to a man, if he does not act it in his life and merely wastes his months and years in talking about it. There are people who think that the more they talk about religion and

spirituality, the more will they become religious and pious in the eye of the people. There is little difference between him who talks of religion, but does not act it and the man who goes by the name of a "hypocrite." All hypocrisy is bad, but religious hypocrisy is worse. Religion of spirituality is not separate from morality and piety. All these are as it were interwoven and the one means the other and they all mean the same spirituality must become visible, if it is true to its name through our deeds and not through our words.

Who is the truly spiritual man? Is he the one who talks of the brotherhood of man, but does not be friend the oppressed and degraded and even goes the length of decrying those who are so engaged or the man who puts his ideas and principles into practice, heedless of what the hypocritical world around him may think and say of him? In defining a **Sadhu*, Tukaram lays special emphasis on his practical life. Not his words, not his glib talk, but his *acts* which make man a *Sadhu*. He who loves his servants and maids, even as he loves his own son, he who holds the man who has no protection, to his heart, is a *Sadhu* and not he who, when on the platform, gives out windy orations full of eloquent phrases and much pathos. Let us all beware, lest in our desire to appear religious to the world, we lose sight of true religion and become mere tinkling cymbals more worthless than the irreligious man whom we are never tired of condemning.

—V. S. S.

God in the Soul

On the one hand there is the desire for worldly pleasures and on the other, there is the hankering after God. In proportion as the desires for worldly pleasures is curbed, the hankering after God is kindled. When this yearning is kindled, the heart seeks Him and sees Him everywhere as the result of attaining Him. The theist having been pure in heart through knowledge sees the Beneficent God, the truth of Truth, the life of Life, the consciousness of Consciousness in his own soul and attains the goal of life by enjoying the supremely pure divine bliss. That perfect Person is not far away from any one of us. He dwells in the individual soul. All beings and all creatures, all worlds live, move and have their being

* Saint.

in Him. Until the eye of knowledge is open, people think Him as far-off; but one whose eye of knowledge has been opened, sees Him in his own soul, having controlled his passions, disciplined his mind and turned away from worldly desires with a calm and patient heart.

Wisdom Tabloids (21)

Patience, forgiveness, control of mind, honesty, purity of body and mind, control of the senses, knowledge of scriptures, knowledge of God, truthfulness, and control of anger—these are the ten characteristics of piety.

* * * *

Humanity will attain its highest perfection when all men will perform their duties, united together in love, with noble intentions, in obedience to the law of righteousness and for the glory of God and not for fear of punishment.

* * * *

A man desirous of good should look upon others as on himself; for sorrow and happiness are equally felt by all.

* * * *

Always remember that you cannot advance a single step without the favour of God. Body, mind, soul, strength and intelligence, all depend upon His mercy. Therefore knowing Him to be the source of all, be humble, giving up pride and haughtiness.

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The humble obtain both temporal and spiritual progress.

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Do not resort to unrighteousness with the thought that righteousness is of no avail.

* * * *

A man attains God, when he does not commit any offence towards any creature by deeds, words and thought.

* * * *

All the virtues of the man who indulges in sinful thought, sinful talk and sinful action having entered into a course of unrighteous life, perish.

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They perform austerity who refrain from sinful actions by mind, speech, deeds and understanding and not they who mortify the body.

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The wise delight in righteousness and earn their livelihood by righteous means. Thus men become righteous and attain grace.

* * * *

A man attains holy fame and goes to the holy world by righteous action.

* * * *

Dedication

"If we dedicate ourselves wholly to our God, what is there to be afraid of" asks Saint Tukaram in one of his beautiful *Abhangas*—beautiful not merely for their expression, but the spirit of trust which they breathe. The answer to the query is supplied by Tukaram himself in the same *Abhanga*. If the Dedication is complete, he says, fear cannot touch him. The one condition which has to be fulfilled before the fear of God or of anything else flies from us is "a complete dedication to God." Partial or imperfect dedication will be of no avail. When we prepare ourselves for the service of God, it ought to become our sole ideal. Otherwise, like the man who wanted to be saved and who went to Jesus to ask him what he must do to obtain salvation and who when told the remedy "follow me" thought of his home and his belongings and valued them more than salvation, we may also attach undue importance to the affairs of the world and refuse to serve our Father. If we dedicate ourselves entirely to God, He will show us the field where we may labour and serve Him. Dedication to God's service means no sacrifice on our part. To worldly minded persons, the acts of a servant of God appear to be so many illustrations of self-sacrifice on his part. But to him they do not mean so. To him God's service is salvation—the highest and the noblest ideal for which any human being can strive. Let us all be selfish in this respect and let us show our selfishness by a whole-hearted surrender of ourselves to our Maker. For there can be nothing more glorious than it for us to do.

—V. S. S.

Youth and Religion

The unwise say that youth is for enjoyment or pleasure and old age for the practice of righteousness. Unrighteousness tarnishes the young as much as the old. Generally one has to reap the good or bad fruits of the habits of youth throughout the life. In youth, sin and temptation violently attack a man. One should not forget that death takes away from this earth even the young. Therefore one should take refuge in God, from youth upwards. One should habituate himself to righteous conduct and carefully avoid sinful practices. One should shun evil company and associate with pious men and rigorously examine himself day and night.

Rao Bahadur Veerasalingam Pantulu

Rao Bahadur Kandukuri Veerasalingam Pantulu, popularly known as the "Vidyasagar of the South" a title bestowed on him by the late Mr. Justice Ranade at the Indian Social Congress which met at Madras in 1898—was one of the noted Indians of modern times. The memory of this great social reformer and literary genius who nearly for the space of half a century struggled hard to set right the social order of things in Southern India is bound to be green for all time.

Veerasalingam, an Andhra was born at Rajahmundry in the Godavari District of the Madras Presidency on the 16th April 1848. From early days he distinguished himself as a scholar and pundit of great learning and literary eminence in Telugu. He was, for long, professor of the Telugu Literature in the Government Arts College, Rajahmundry and in the Presidency College, Madras. After he retired from Government service on a small pension, he continued to devote himself to the cause of social reform and uplift to which he dedicated himself early in life, with unremitting zeal. He founded several institutions the expenses of which he met out of the monies he got by the sale of his literary works of poetry and prose in the Telugu language. If the Telugu literature is rich to-day in prose works, it is primarily due to the labours of Pundit Veerasalingam. Hundreds of ancient works were collected, revised and published by him. The number of books that he himself wrote in prose and



R. B. Veerasalingam Pantulu

poetry or edited in a manner unequalled by any other writer of the age, and which are in the form of novels, verse-tales, *kavyas*, dramas and others, number nearly two hundred. Most of them are original works based on laborious and profound historical research. The first prose *Kavya*, the first satire and the first autobiography in the Telugu language are from his inimitable pen. His satires expose all the social foibles admirably and they are considered to be the very best in the Telugu language. He is popularly known as "*Gadya Brahma*" on account of his Telugu prose works couched as they are in a forcible, chaste and simple style singularly his own.

A Social and Religious Reformer

But the most notable achievement of his, had been in the field of social and religious reform. He was the first in the *Andhra Desh* to have come under the influence of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Keshub Chandra Sen of Bengal. It did not take long for him with his indefatigable industry, persistent energy, steadfastness and courage, to attempt in every possible manner to revolutionize the minds of men both educated and uneducated, so as to lead them in the path of social and religious reform throughout the length and breadth of the Telugu country. He looked upon hundreds of forlorn widows as his own children, sheltered them, fed them, and got them married at his own expense. When he met with relentless and unscrupulous propaganda from priests and reactionary pundits, he had to carry on an aggressive type of Social Reform after chastising them with the help of his eminent pen more especially when he suspected that they were actuated by selfishness in perpetuating ignorance in the matter of the observance of vicious, unmeaning customs and ritual in social life and in religion. Nothing satisfied him but solid and substantial work of a practical kind; and in his scheme of work, conferences, speeches and the like, occupied but a secondary place. His ideal was one of organized, sustained and simultaneous advance of the society in all branches of life. With this object in view he founded the Rajahmundry Town Hall, the Theistic School, the Orphanage, the Widows' Home and the Prarthana Samaj to which he dedicated all his property, earned almost by the sweat of his brow as a writer, under Trust deeds. He was terrible and relentless as a journalist. His "*Vivekavardhani*" which he edited as an organ of social and religious reform at Rajahmundry

was a terror to unscrupulous priests and officers in the civil and judicial departments given as they were in those days to dishonest ways. Many an abuse in those departments acquiesced in and almost connived at for several decades by higher officials was remedied by the healthy influences brought about by his pen. His fearless struggles drew on him the wrath of his opponents which though exhibited in various ways to cripple his activities ended finally in victory to him in almost every project undertaken by him. Veerasalingam's services in the cause of female education mark him out as a pioneer in that direction in South India. He is responsible for nearly one hundred widow remarriages celebrated in the teeth of the most unscrupulous and virulent opposition of the reactionary members of the public. These were celebrated with great enthusiasm and they led the way to many more celebrated throughout the Southern continent, later on. At one time the Widow Remarriage Association functioning at Rajahmundry broke up on account of certain causes. But undeterred, Veerasalingam Pantulu himself undertook to celebrate widow remarriages personally and he later started the "*Hitakarini Samaj*" which is functioning to this day. It was only at the fag end of his remarkable career that his life-work came to be known and appreciated throughout the length and breadth of this country and particularly in Bombay which responded to his call for funds.

Veerasalingam Pantulu was a devout *Anustanik Brahmo* and his sermons at the Prarthana Samaj were of a kind which appealed even to the most orthodox or even reactionary individuals in society. Many a person who heard him deliver his sermons, turned a new leaf in his life and ultimately became an ardent Prarthana Samajist. His sermons in the Telugu language acquired the status of real classics and they occupy a high place even as literary productions. Started as it was with barely four members, the Prarthana Samaj grew to a mighty structure doing credit to the whole country peopled by the Telugus. The Maharaja of Pithapuram came early under the influence of Veerasalingam Pantulu and greatly helped all his endeavours to stabilise and perfect the Prarthana Samaj movement and the cause of Social Reform in the heart of the Telugu country. Sir R. Venkatratnam Naidu was another Prarthana Samajist that joined him and supplemented his labours in the same direction. While Sir Venkatratnam Naidu could appeal to the intelligentsia,

Veerasalingam could reach through the medium of the vernacular the mass mind which he prepared to readily assimilate the wealth of wisdom conveyed through the medium of his sermons.

Veerasalingam Pantulu's work drew the highest praise from Westerners also. All his works have been translated into Canarese and some of them also into other Indian languages. The greatest tribute was paid by the "Times" London, in 1887 which commenting on his "Fortune's Wheel" an English translation of his social novel "*Rajasekhara Charitra*," referred in glowing terms to his remarkable achievements in the cause of social reform of the down-trodden members of the Hindu society.

The last years of Veerasalingam Pantulu were those to some extent of disappointment and anxiety for him as some of the institutions founded by him showed signs of deterioration on account of internal disputes coupled with the fact that the death of his devoted wife before him, greatly handicapped him in his work. All the same, he had the ultimate satisfaction that these institutions survived several difficulties which beset them, before he breathed his last on the 27th May 1919 to the great sorrow of the whole country and particularly of the Telugus for whose regeneration, he laboured with exceptional zeal and devotion, leaving permanent unerasable footprints on the sands of time. —*N. C. Narsimha Acharya.*

Wisdom Tabloids (22)

The sinner shall have to reap the consequences of his sin some day or other.

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Never desire to gain worldly comfort and happiness by unrighteous means. None can be happy even in this world by unrighteous means. This world is also the kingdom of God. The sceptre of His justice waves over this world.

* * * *

Earn righteousness after the example of coral insects. Though tiny creatures, how they build up wonderful islands in course of time!

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When death will part the soul from the body, no friend of this earth shall be able to help in any way. Righteousness alone will then show the way to peace and consolation. Therefore look upon righteousness as a better friend than father and mother.

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If you have to leave everything for righteousness, rather do it.

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Righteousness is the strength of the pious. Righteousness is the manhood of men and the ornament of women. Righteousness is the means of attaining happiness, the mine of self contentment and the source of divine bliss. Man comes near God, the supreme bliss, of pure, free and enlightened nature, having crossed the dangerous darkness with the help of righteousness alone.

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With the transitory life, one should not act inimically towards any one, in pride. On the other hand, he should be engaged in doing good to all during the few days of stay here. God is our common Father, all men are brothers of each other; one should not desecrate this sacred relationship by mutual hostility.

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Happiness and contentment depart from the home in which hatred, jealousy and quarrel-someness enter, and it soon loses its beauty. Therefore the mistress (of the home) should be careful in this respect; she should take such measures as would preserve peace in the whole family. She should behave justly with all and should seek the good of all.

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Do not despise yourself, if you are not already master of wealth. Try to earn wealth till the day of death; do not consider it as difficult.

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Do not despise yourself, if you are fallen in the miseries of poverty. Labour in the path of righteousness and know yourself as competent to acquire riches throughout life. Mitigating the rigours of poverty should be considered as an approved work of God.

* * * *

One should live in independence by the exercise of the powers mercifully given by God. Self-respect and self-help should be practised.

Control the Senses

Do not permit the senses to wander at the instigation of passions that rise at any moment. But restrain the senses by controlling and disciplining the mind in obedience to the dictates of spiritual religion. If the mind is under control then impure matters, even when they cross the path of the senses, cannot dislodge a man from purity. When one has to practise religion in this world, beset with temptations, calamities will arrive at every step unless the mind is kept under subjection. If the mind of a man is subservient to the senses, he is sunk in sin and delusion having lost consciousness.

Never think that the senses will be restrained when they have been satisfied with the enjoyment of worldly things; therefore there is a great necessity of carefully controlling the senses. The desire for enjoyment increases the more you indulge in them, and the heart will become the more unruly. Therefore never slacken the efforts of controlling the senses and disciplining the mind.

Unholy things when they find access into the mind of a man whether by one or more senses, create unholy desires leading to his fall. Therefore do not give opportunity to any of the senses to indulge in worldly pleasure just as it likes.

The Threefold Status

Good and evil consequences arise out of mental operations like thought and utterances of words and actions performed with the body. Whatever actions men do, either by mind, word or body, not an iota of it is lost. Not a thought, not a word, not an action goes in vain. Some good or evil born out of all these enters into the soul. The soul attains, superior, inferior or middle status according to this. In the measure in which, you will perform righteous action through body, mind and speech, your soul will be purified and impurity will accumulate according to the measure of sinful actions. Therefore be (ever) engaged in good deeds with body, mind and speech.

Wisdom Tabloids (23)

One should never be guilty of miserliness.

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Unless thought and speech are mutually controlled one becomes subject to the two great evils of falsehood and speaking at random. If speech does not correspond to what the mind thinks, then it is falsehood; and if the thought of the mind does not agree with what is said in words, then it is unconnected random speaking.

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Idleness and inactivity lead to sinful thoughts and as a consequence the actions also become sinful. Idleness is the root of all evils.

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One should not be addicted to amusements pleasing to the senses, neglecting the worship of God and the house-hold duties. The aim of human life is very high.

* * * *

Love God with your whole heart and perform actions dear unto Him living in this world. This is His worship. This is the means of attaining the object of human life. Temporal and eternal good shall be attained by it. Such is the injunction, teaching and evidence of Brahmoism. There is no other way for man than to love Him and doing what is dear unto Him.

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It is not proper to walk in life aiming only at fame. Live for righteousness controlling your desires. If people praise you for that, do not be proud and puffed up, but show humility and gentleness.

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Faith—the Eye of the Soul

In fact, Faith is the beginning of religion, the basis of religious life, the point of departure from worldly life to the gate through which we enter into God's Kingdom.

What the eye is to things visible, what reason is to things demonstrable that is Faith to the invisible realities of the spirit.



Dr. T. C. Khandwala

world. Faith is the eye of the soul whereby it sees spiritual realities, directly and vividly. For verily the soul hath its eyes just as the body hath.

None of us can enter God's Kingdom unless we become innocent as little children. Whatever value you may attach to your education and civilization, your social and domestic virtues and piety, for which the world so highly esteems you, you are greatly mistaken if you think with such price you can purchase everlasting life. You must bend your proud head and with humility and lowliness of spirit enter the narrow and low gate of God's Kingdom.

Faith enables men not only to live well but what is more, to die well. Death, which is so tormenting and dreadful to sinners and to worldly-minded men, in spite of their boasted honesty, is but a welcome guide to God's house to the man of faith. Faith sweetens and gladdens the death bed and wreathes it with the evergreens of hope and resignation.

—Keshub Chunder Sen.

Steady Progress

The struggles are not merely between the reformers and anti-reformers, but between Liberty and Tyranny throughout the world between Justice and Injustice and between Right and Wrong. But from a reflection on the past events of history, we clearly perceive that liberal principles in politics and religion have been long gradually but steadily, gaining ground, notwithstanding the opposition and obstinacy of despots and bigots.

—Ram Mohan Roy.

Dr. T. C. Khandwala

Dr. Khandwala is a healer of men's bodies. He is not great as the world understands the term. But he is a consistent and earnest seeker after God and His righteousness. For what else was it that induced the old man who is now 82 not out, to leave those near and dear to him for a land on the other side of the globe at an age when according to the Psalmist he had passed the span of life allotted to man in this world, but a thirst for the knowledge of God? Though fairly equipped with spiritual experiences,

through association with the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj through a long range of years, the fact, that he joyfully volunteered to go to the other side of the hemisphere to sit at the feet of those who had drunk deeply the nectar of spiritual thought and life, taught and exemplified by Jesus Christ, rendered the more luminous through contact with the spiritual thoughts of the East which had found their way through philosopher Schopenhauer, scholars Max Muller and Emerson, Poet Whittier and other Indologists and given a fresh meaning to His sayings and doings, shows not only his intense thirst of God's knowledge, but his great humility which is one of his distinguishing characteristics.

Dr. Khandwala was born in 1858 of humble but pious parents. He completed his vernacular studies in a school at Bombay and at the age of ten joined the Goculdas Tejpal School for his further Gujarati studies and Elphinstone High School for his English education. Here he distinguished himself as a bright and careful student, who in addition to his text-books devoted himself to the study of moral and inspiring literature. Smiles' *Self-Help* and *Character* were two of the books which he was never tired of reading. While at school, he founded a Boys' Club for the discussion of useful subjects. He was fortunate to come in contact with such eminent persons as Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Pratap Chandra Muzumdar and Christian Missionaries like Rev. Father Rivington, Father Lord and Father Page. He attended their lectures and discourses and this made a profound impression upon him. He passed the Matriculation Examination of the University of Bombay from the Elphinstone High School in 1876 and joining the Medical College he graduated from it in 1883. Soon after he was taken up in the Bombay Provincial Medical Service and posted on medical duty in several places in the Presidency. His contact with the Arya Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj of Bombay had worked a great change in his religious views. He had lost faith in the worship of idols and had come to believe in the spiritual worship of the one true God. Wherever his medical duties took him, Dr. Khandwala not only ministered to the needs of the physically suffering humanity, but by holding prayer meetings tried to improve and strengthen his own soul and the souls of those who cared to attend them. When he was stationed at Kalyan and Bandra—places near Bombay, he regularly

attended meetings and gatherings of societies and Samajes which had the acquisition of knowledge, promotion of friendly intercourse, social, moral and religious improvement of people as their object. He joined and worked for all institutions which worked for reform and never missed any of their activities which could supply spiritual and moral food to him, however little it may be.

After a useful life of active service for thirtyfour years, Dr. Khandwala retired on pension in 1920. When at Aden he happened to invest some of his savings in some local firms in the hope of getting interest at a higher rate than that of the bank. His object in doing it was to utilise the interest on the education of his children. Unfortunately Dr. Khandwala's expectations did not materialise. The firms failed and instead of getting a high rate of interest, he lost half of his investment.

A similar misfortune befell him when he invested all his savings at the advice of a friend in a precious metal workshop in Bombay, which ended in complete failure. After his recovery from this misfortune, at the time of the great world war, he purchased an extensive piece of land, the prices of which were rising tremendously. Soon the war-boom was over, the business collapsed, land prices crashed down and from a creditor, Dr. Khandwala became a debtor. This was a tremendous blow to him. Nothing like financial misfortunes test the mettle of which a man is made. Dr. Khandwala bore his loss manfully. At this critical time his wife came to his rescue. She had all her jewellery sold to repay a part of the debt. To the payment of the balance, Dr. Khandwala pledged his pension with the bank.

After retirement from service, Dr. Khandwala utilised his leisure in mission tours, going about delivering the message of the Brahmo Samaj to the different parts of the Presidency, and also took part in a missionary tour on behalf of the Brahmo Samaj to Japan.

At the time of the Centenary celebrations of the Brahmo Samaj, Dr. Khandwala, then more than seventy years old, formed one of the party which carried the greetings of the Theistic Church of India to Burma, and Japan. He paid for his expenses, himself.

It was at the time of the Centenary celebrations, when touring some of the southern Presidency districts in the company of American and English Unitarian guests that Dr. Khandwala became closely associated with the members of the party. His association with Dr. Lethrop in particular, brought him the offer of the Meadville Theological Scholarship for studying in America. Dr. Khandwala readily accepted the offer.

In 1930, he started for America with his youngest daughter, Miss Kapila who had secured the Barbar Scholarship for women for an advanced course of study at the Michigan University. They both travelled via Europe visiting Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Scandanavia, Belgium, France and England, on the way, and reached America. Miss Khandwala left for her University and Dr. Khandwala left for the Meadville College for his studies, where he remained for a year. After finishing his courses of studies at Meadville, he started for Berkely to join the Theological Seminary there.

While there a terrible misfortune befell the old doctor. His son Mangal, a major in the Indian Medical Service at Cannanore succumbed to influenza. He was the main support of the doctor's large family. What a terrible shock, the premature death of the young son who was a prop to him in his old age, must have been to him, may better be imagined than described. But the brave soldier of God that the doctor is, he bore the bereavement with fortitude.

After completing his course of studies at Meadville, and Berkely and touring through the whole of the U.S.A., Dr. Khandwala returned to India at the end of 1934. He is now an old man of eighty-two bent with age, but his youthful enthusiasm for the cause of Theism continues as fresh as ever. In 1935, he fell seriously ill, but fortunately recovered. On his sick bed, he expressed a desire to bring out a book in English which would serve as an inspiration and support to enquiring souls. The book which includes this biographical sketch is the outcome of his wish.

Dr. Khandwala has been a wrestling soul. He has struggled with success against all sorts of tyrannies and injustices, social, moral and religious. Even a cursory perusal of his Auto-biography which is published as a companion volume to the "Spiritual

Power House" will give the reader a clear idea of the hard discipline through which he has passed and the gradual but sure growth of the soul, which has resulted from it. In spite of many handicaps he has splendidly discharged his duty by his children who are all well-educated. Dr. Khandwala has now the great satisfaction of basking in the love of his children and sympathy and affection of friends of whom, in spite of his heterodox opinions, he can claim a goodly host.

—V. S. S.

Prayers

I

From untruth lead us unto truth ;
From darkness lead us unto light ;
From death lead us unto Life Eternal.
O thou Self-revealing One !
Do thou reveal thyself unto us.
O thou Awe-inspiring Presence !
Save us by the light of Thy benign
countenance.

- 2 Merciful God, Thou hast made all other spiritual gifts hard of attainment, but the great blessing of hope in Thy Kingdom is easily available. Holiness, faith and love are difficult to acquire, but Thou, feedest the hungry soul with hope always —*K. C. S.*
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- 3 Give me this gift alone, O God, keep it for me. I am clinging to Thy feet and will not leave them. I throw no other burden upon Thee, or do not wish for anything else. I pray that Thou shouldst accept my service. I call myself Thy servant, and as a servant accept me. —*Tukaram.*
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- 4 O my God, the whole world has given me up, and I rest my life on Thee alone. Thou art my trust all-in-all. That brings peace to my being. In all the three worlds there is no stay for me. I cast my burden now on Thee, alone. Like a bird perched on the branch of a tree, I have no place or point of support except Thee. —*Tukaram.*
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- 5 Let us put all our burden on God; and He will take us along to our heaven of rest and peace. To trust in man is no good; think of and remember God forever. He protects the world. Hold Him constantly in mind. He who

surrenders himself entirely to His keeping never is left alone. O God, Thou art the friend and leader of all Thy true devotees.

—*Tukaram.*

- 6 I find my heart ever uncontrollable and intent on things earthly. The crop of evil in which I am thus involved is beyond me to shake off. I pray, therefore, O, my Lord to save me by Thy power. A fish caught with the bait cannot save itself. O Lord, I am so ignorant, so foolish. I am waiting for Thee to come and take me, and save me.

—*Tukaram.*

- 7 O Lord, my only longing is to see Thy face. But my action does not correspond to my longing. I can see Thee only if Thou in Thy power drawest me to Thee. Externally I may seem all right. But inside there is no purification. I feel O Lord, that thus my life is being wasted away. I crave, therefore, Thy help, which alone can take me out of this slough and save me.

—*Tukaram.*

- 8 We bow down to Thee, O Lord. Do with us as it pleases Thee. We do not know how to speak to Thee; we but prattle like children. Do Thou listen to us, we pray. We are, without Thee, like unto orphans forlorn and forsaken. Oh, protect us, save us, lift us up. O Lord, Thou art the uplifter of the fallen, the shield of the weak. With love we come to Thee. Do not cast us away.

—*Tukaram.*

- 9 Thou art the Mother of the Universe; why then, dost Thou not show kindness to me? Thou art known to have cared for many in the past: why then wilt Thou not bear my burden? I am entirely Thine; protect me. Thou art all-knowing, and all-kind. Thou art the adored of the whole world. Thou art the only great one. Do Thou take me unto Thy bosom and shelter me from harm.

—*Kanhopatra.*

- 10** O Lord, I pray that not a moment of my life should go in vain without remembering Thee. Let Thy name be in my mouth, let my mind and heart be full of Thee. Let all my senses be directed to Thy feet. Thou art our mother, and let us love Thee, as the child loves its mother. Oh, do not be away from me even for a moment, Mother. That is all that I seek as blessing from Thee. —*Tukaram.*
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- 11** Dear and sweet God, in this world of sorrow and tribulations, we do certainly require the constant presence of a faithful friend. We cannot live here without such a friend. And if Thou, O God, dost not condescend to be such a friend to us we shall be indeed sad and desolate. But Thou art actually such a friend to every one of us. Thou art determined to make us happy. —*K. C. S.*
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- 12** Oh Lord, become the inspirer of my mind. Oh Lord, lead me to control my wandering mind. Use all Thy power to fasten me unto Thee alone. I am oppressed and weighed down by wandering propensities. Let me so fix my mind on Thee, that these find no harbour in my soul, nor expression by my tongue. Thou knowest what is good for me. Oh Father, grant it to me to know and do Thy will. —*Tukaram.*
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- 13** Why hast Thou forgotten me, my God? How Thou hast ceased, my Father, to pour Thy mercy upon me? How then, shall I go on this pilgrimage of life without Thee? How am I to be fortified in spirit without Thee? My prayers have not yet received their due response from Thee. How then, can I be free from care? O give me one word, one sign, that Thou art near me so that I may find peace and strength and courage in this life. —*Tukaram.*
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- 14 May I not get anything to live on ! May I not have even children. But I wish that Thou shouldst be kind to me. I speak with my tongue thus, and it upbraids me. I tell so to others and say it to myself. May my body suffer any persecution, may any misfortune fall upon me. But give it to me, O Lord, to cherish Thee in my heart for ever. All else is perishable ; to remember God, the ever kind and merciful father is the good of life. —*Tukaram.*
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- 15 Father, we thank Thee for the high nature which Thou hast given us. We bless Thee for the discipline of daily life, and pray that by our experience we may grow wiser and nobler hearted. May our hearts grow warmer every day, and our confidence in Thee so firm that it cannot change. May we have strength for every day's duty, patience to bear any cross that is laid upon us, and a soul that is full of loving kindness to our brothers here on the earth.
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- 16 They call me Thy servant ; therefore, O Lord, protect me. Thou art the protector of those whom the world affords no refuge ; Thou art the saviour of the fallen and the sinful ; therefore now live up to that name. My heart tells me that I am full of defects. I know not how to approach Thee and propitiate Thee. Thou knowest everything that passes in my heart. Thou art the ocean of mercy. Therefore, my God, lift me up and show me the way to salvation. —*Tukaram.*
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- 17 Make me strong, Lord, out of weakness ; the besetting sin of my life had been brooding over infirmities and failures, bearing fears and suspicion, thinking too much of slight injuries—real and fancied—and getting excited. From this sin of mind and heart free me, O Lord. Teach me to live in contemplation of Thee and guide me to serve *all* in

particular the poor and the helpless and afflicted, not for gain or honour but for Thy sake and to do Thy will.

—N. G. C.

- 18** O Lord, Thou art my father and mother, Thou art my kith and kin and my wealth. Thou art my only benefactor. Thou art my God and my being. Thou art my faith, O protector of the Universe. Thou art all that I know of right action and right thought. Thou bearest my burden and ledest me on. Thou art the only standard of conduct that I know. I swear by Thee alone. I have surrendered my being to Thee entirely. Do with me as it pleases Thee. I rest in Thee for ever. —*Tukaram*.
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- 19** I know, O Lord, that in myself I am helpless and without worth and power to approach Thee. And as such I fear for my future. When I think of all that is written in the Shastras, I feel nervous and suffocated in my being. My senses overpower me, and in them I find myself completely lost. I cannot control even a single of them ; what, then, when they all attack me in a mass. Therefore, O Lord, I turn to Thee for shelter and safety. I am completely lost if I do not feel that Thou art behind me. —*Tukaram*.
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- 20** Thou art, O Lord, the Mother of all created beings. Have mercy on us, as our dear Mother. Thou hast protected all beings in the Universe so far ; why then wouldst Thou not help me, and why dost Thou think me alone a burden ? I am Thine entirely ; therefore, Oh Lord, protect me, as becomes The infinite and eternal Good that Thou art. Oh God, Thou art all-knowing and full of compassion, adorable by the entire Universe. Kanhopatra bows down to Thee and seeks Thy shelter. Protect her. —*Kanhopatra*.
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- 21** Thou, O Lord, art our real kith and kin. Thou art always with us as the supreme good. May I ever love Thee. Thou art the life of my life, nearer than my life. Thou art the innermost treasure of my innermost being. Thou art my blood, my pedigree and my friend ; thou art the nectar of my life. I resign myself joyfully and wholly unto Thee. In every sense, and with every fibre of my being I dedicate myself to Thee as Thy servant. May Thou grant that I should ever feel that I am Thine and Thou art mine.

—*Tukaram.*

- 22** O Lord, we pray Thee for the fulness of Thy spirit. We beseech Thee to animate us with new life. Awaken us to a holy zeal, a joy in Thy service, a promptness to do and to suffer what Thou appointest for us. May the labours of life become acts of religion and offerings to Thee. May our sense of Thy presence be ever more clear, our conceptions of Thy character more bright, our gratitude more tender, our good will more overflowing. May a divine life be ever growing with us.

- 23** Oh Lord, I throw myself entirely on Thy mercy, with all the faith that is in me. I surrender my body, my mind, and my power of utterance to Thee, all in all. My heart longs for nothing else. My desire is to be for ever at Thy feet. None else, I know, can relieve me of the burden that weighs me down. We are Thy servants and Thou belongest to us accordingly. Therefore we follow Thee and approach Thee, whatever the distance between Thee and us. We sit down by Thy door, and will never leave till we have seen Thee face to face.

—*Tukaram.*

- 24** Oh Lord, I pray that I should not be led away by praise, and should not turn Thy name into a commodity for sale. This is the grace I seek of Thee, O, merciful one. Thou art the prince of kindness ; give me this. Let me not be

lured by another's riches and by what he enjoys. May I never listen to the scandal of the good and the saintly ; may I never be filled with spite. Thou art my fount of joy and I need nothing else to make me happy. Let not self-conceit and pride fill my being, so that I may never forget Thy holy feet, which are my sole refuge and stay.

—*Tukaram.*

- 25** O God, who givest us not only the day for labour and the night for rest, but also the peace of this blessed day, grant, we beseech Thee, that this blessed season of holy quiet may be profitable to us in heavenly things, and refresh and strengthen us to finish the work that Thou hast given us to do. Thou, O Lord, art our strength, our refuge and only deliverer. Open within us the fountains of prayer and holy meditation, reveal to us Thy truth, quicken us by Thy spirit, confirm us in the knowledge of Thy love, and in the true fellowship of all those who trust in Thee.
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- 26** O Lord, Thou art the abode of mercy and love, Thou art the protector of the Universe. Who else but Thee can shelter me then ? Who else can be my refuge ? The ways of the world, the paths of life here below are beset with dangers and are difficult to tread, unless Thou leadest us on. Sorrows, troubles, overwhelm and cross our path like mountain barriers. Who else has the power to remove them ? O Lord, I pray that Thou be kind to me, pour Thy grace into my heart and be my resting place for ever and ever. None else can guide me to that joy, blessedness and peace.

—*Tukaram.*

- 27** O Lord, our God, who turnest the shadow of death into morning, and lightest the face of the earth, grant that we may be children of light and of the day. Let the Sun of Thy righteousness shine in our hearts, enlightening our reason, making clear our conscience, kindling our love.

We would give ourselves to Thee this day, beseeching Thee so to rule and govern us by Thy good spirit, that all faithless distrust and all evil thoughts and desires may be driven from our hearts, and that we may walk with joy in the sight of Thy countenance, and in the way of Thy commandments.

- 28** O Lord, without Thee who will care for us, exhausted and woe-begone as we are? To whom else shall we open our heart and the sorrow that fills it? Who else can appease our hunger and quench our thirst? Who can relieve us of this distress, who can bring peace to our disconsolated spirit? Who else can take us across safely, except Thee as our pilot? Of whom can we ask anything? Who else can give it to us with love overflowing? Whom can we approach with unassailable claim as our very own? Who can help us? O Lord, Thou art our Master. Thou knowest everything. I bow down before Thee and seek Thy grace. —*Tukaram.*
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- 29** Thou art, Oh Lord, my mother and father, all that I possess and all to whom I am bound up as my kith and kin. Oh Lord, do what Thou thinkest best for me. Thou art my God, Thou art my life, and Thou art my faith, Oh Universal Soul. Thou art my thought, Thou art my act and Thou art the sole sustainer of me and mine, and bearest my burden. Thou, alone, art the balance in which I weigh everything in myself. I swear by Thee and I swear it is true. Oh Lord, I have completely sold myself to Thee—my soul, my life, my faith and my all. Mayst Thou do with me what it pleases Thee to do. —*Tukaram.*
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- 30** The miser buries his hoardings in the earth; there his mind is ever directed. Whatever he does, wherever he goes, he never forgets, for a moment, his hoarded treasure at home. So be it with me, O Lord, in thinking of Thee.

Let Thy thought absorb me completely, let that be the constant habit of my mind. That is the one blessing I seek of Thee, never, never to forget Thee. Wherever I go, whatever I do, let my heart, untravelled and untrammelled fondly turn to Thee. Oh Lord, I am but an ignorant and foolish and an erring soul. I pray to be led by Thee, loved by Thee, and blessed by Thee, with the hope of grace and forgiveness.

—*Namdeo.*

- 31** Oh Lord, who cares for us who are fatigued, tired out and disappointed? To whom should we open our heart and unburden our sorrow? Who will satisfy our craving hunger? Who will relieve us, of this distress and heart-burning? Who will lead us alone to the heaven we yearn for? To whom, Oh Lord, except to Thee, shall we ask what we desire? Who, out of deep love, will feed that desire? To whom shall we say in confidence and perfect reliance that He belongs to us? Who else can come to our rescue? Oh Lord, Thou knowest it all. To Thee I bow and kneel in all adoration, dependence and love.

—*Tukaram.*

- 32** This is my prayer to Thee, my Lord,
Strike, strike at the root of penury in my heart.
Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows,
Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service
Give me the strength never to disown
The poor, or bend my knees before insolent might.
Give me the strength to raise my mind high
—above daily trifles.
And give me the strength to surrender my
strength to Thy will with love.
—*Rabindranath Tagore.*

- 33** O God, Thou art our Mother, Thou knowest what we need and thirst for, as Thy children. How shall we pray to Thee, what can we ask of Thee? Let us kneel and bow down before Thee, touching Thy holy feet with our heads. In whatever condition of life Thou placest us, let us be in it, with our heart fixed upon Thee. That is the service we offer Thee, our kind Mother, never forgetting Thee at any time, in our acts in this world. Whatever is imperfect in us, pray, make it perfect. Thou art the great Giver of all good. What can we say to Thee, imperfect that we are, and poor as is our talent. We confess we are full of sin and error. O Lord, make us whole. That is our prayer to Thee, as our true Mother. —*Tukaram.*
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- 34** O God, our Father, we come to Thee, seeking for a greater quietness of heart and trust, new earnestness of purpose, and steadfast hope. Make us more ready to deny ourselves and labour for others. May we have more of that holy and loving spirit which has helped to redeem the world in the lives of thy faithful servants of every generation. As they toiled and suffered and forgot themselves in caring for their brethren, may we be of like mind, and so become more truly Thy children. Faithful to labour and to wait, may it be our constant prayer that Thy kingdom may come in the world around us and in our heart.

- 35** O Lord, we are all beggars before Thee. We come to Thee asking for benediction. Let thy love be our food; that is what we beg of Thee, most humbly and in a penitent mood. Pray, O Lord, what in us is imperfect, make perfect. We have all our burdens to bear. Lighten them, O Lord, out of Thy grace and mercy. Do not turn us away from Thy door. We know we have not loved Thee as we should. We have not served Thee as we must. And yet in our distress, in our perplexities, in our cares and anxieties, in our defeats and failures, in our disappointments,

to whom can we turn for help except to Thee? That is how we are beggars. Do not, we pray Thee, turn Thy face away from us. —*Tukaram.*

36 O God, our Heavenly Father, may our life, in daily conduct and in thought and speech, be calmed and hallowed by Thy abiding presence. May our hearts be guarded from impure and angry thought, and our lips from passionate and foolish speech, from idle jesting, from irreverence that mars the pure and beautiful and gracious things of life. Let us not obtrude anything of our baser self upon our neighbour, but frame our actions and our speech in kindness and good will. Taught of thy love, may we be hospitable to the thought and word of others, and in our response be messenger of peace and givers of joy. Teach us when to be silent and when to speak, and perfect in us the true spirit of fellowship, as thy children.

37 Into the calm of communion with thee, O God, we gather with grateful hearts. Thou wilt hide us from the strife of tongues; Thy greatness will be our strong-hold, Thy goodness our source of peace and joy. Let not our ignorance of the far-off issues of life discomfort us; but keep us faithful in the present hour to all the high duties and spiritual leadings by which thou dost visit us. Our pathway can never lie outside thy providence, and with thee on our side no harm can assail us. As little ones in our trust, tender-hearted in our love and sympathy, manly and brave in our battle for truth and justice, may we pass all our days; and so be guided through things lowly to the glories of the perfect life.

38 This moment we are, and the next moment we are not. Such is life here below. And yet we run after the object of the senses! Let us behave, O Lord, with our eye towards the Good alone. Let us trust Thee for ever. Let us not be blinded by wealth. Let us not forget the time

when the great Master will claim us, all of a sudden and without a moment's delay. We are proud of our erudition; we are proud of our noble birth; we are blind to the darkness that encroaches upon us, and pulls us down, one and all. This vanity, this greed, this attachment has made us pay our life's forfeit to them. Oh, Gracious God, our father and mother, Thou alone canst save us from ourselves. Have mercy upon us, we pray Thee, in all humility and in penitence of the soul.

—*Namdeo.*

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- 39** Thou, infinite and eternal spirit of good, give it to us that we should never forget Thee; may Thy Grace ever protect us and lead us on to do our very best in all the duties of life that devolve upon us and through them, seek perfect self-realisation. Let us realise that we are one with Thee, Thou fountain of power, wisdom and love. And by opening out our soul to Thy divine wisdom, love and power, let us be the channel through which they may flow to the world about us and flood it with the sunshine of wisdom, love, purity, good deeds, noble thoughts and right feelings. Let us ever feel that whatever of blessing comes to this world through this, is not from us but from Thee alone. Thy will be done; in that confidence and faith may we find our rest and peace.

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- 40** O God, in whom alone is our peace, the breath of Thy holiness is life for ever for every living thing. But the thought of evil is a veil between us. When I remember my sin, I can no longer look up to Thee, Blot out my transgressions with Thy love; uphold my goings with Thy holiness. Behold, I come unto Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy child. Yet take me, in Thy great compassion, once more into Thy service; and through whatever scourging of discipline Thou appointest, with patient endurance and humble trust, lead me to a new steadfastness of obedience. Make pure the heart that

comes to Thee with penitence and hunger after righteousness, and give me strength and peace in the doing of Thy holy will.

- 41** O most blessed Grace, that makest the poor in spirit, rich in virtues, and renderest him who is rich, in many good things humble in heart !

Come Thou down unto me, come and replenish me early with Thy comfort, lest my soul faint for weariness and dryness of mind.

I beseech Thee, O Lord, that I may find grace in Thy sight ; for Thy grace is sufficient for me, though other things that Nature longeth for be not obtained.

Although I be tempted and vexed with many tribulations, yet I will fear no evils so long as Thou art with me.

This alone is by itself my strength : this alone giveth advice and help.

This is stronger than all enemies, and wiser than all the wise. Grant it to me. That is my humble prayer, the prayer of a penitent soul at Thy feet.

- 42** O Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling-place for all generations. So teach us to number our days that we may get us a heart of wisdom. Thou art our helper in every need ; help us to trust more perfectly in Thee. If we are strong, be Thou the glory of our strength : if we are weak, let Thy strength be made perfect in our weakness. If we are perplexed, guide us with Thy counsel : if our day is bright, sanctify the joy. In all our work may we seek Thee, and show ourselves to be approved unto Thee, labourers that need not be ashamed. May we live a life of reality and not of pretence. Save us from hypocrisy and formality, from having a form of godliness without the power thereof. Bless us throughout this day. Hold us by Thy strong hand, in truth and honour and the willing service of unselfish love.

43 O Lord, I am not steadfast in my faith, then how can I blame Thee? I have not served Thee aright, and yet I ask for the reward and wages thereof! I cannot worship Thee, I have no unalloyed faith in Thee, nor have I devotion;—then I must blame myself and my fate if Thou dost not come near me. Many and many of Thy *bhaktas* in the past have lived lives free from lust, anger and other passions fixing their hearts on Thee alone. O Lord, I have none of their merits and none of their claim on Thee. Yet I would meet Thee and look on Thy face. This longing of mine, fulfill, O Lord, out of Thy mercy and grace. For they call Thee merciful. I approach Thee, O Lord, like an ignorant child. As the child is loved and cared for by its parents—so do Thou, I pray, adopt me and treat me.

—*Tukaram.*

44 O Lord, what do I know of Thy power and love? I am so poor and ignorant. But I have faith and patience. And through their strength I feel Thou art in me and about me, and Thou wilt help me. Often times I grow restless and impatient. I am slow of mind, and weak as well. And yet occasions come when I feel convinced that Thou hast not forsaken me. Thou art the life of the Universe; Thou art the God of all gods. And yet I feel so weak and abandoned in moments of doubt and despair. I pray to Thee constantly to lift me up, to embrace me, and to lead me along. Sinner as I am, I turn my unworthy face to Thee. I shall not give up Thy quest. I shall ever sit at Thy door. O protector of the Universe, O, spirit of infinite good and mercy, take me into Thy bosom and give me peace.

—*Tukaram.*

45 O God, who art the author of peace and lover of mankind, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, and whose service is perfect freedom, defend us, Thy humble servants in all assaults of sin; and save us from temptation. Cleanse the thoughts and desires of our heart by the

inspiration of Thy holy spirit. Give unto us that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy name.

I do not know how I came here, nor whither I am going; O the protector of the forlorn, I cling to Thy feet. I know not why I was born and to do what. I embrace Thy feet, the shield of the forsaken.

Without Thy worship I know no other means of salvation; therefore, I hold Thy feet, Thou uplifter of the down-fallen. I feel I am worthy of Thy kindness, I hold on to Thee. Save me. —*Tukaram.*

- 46** O Lord, I do not know how to see Thee in my heart or to hold Thee in my thought. I am but Thy servant, show me the secret of approaching Thee. I do not know how to worship Thee or serve Thee. I know not the nature of the faith that will bring me to Thee, or by which Thou wilt discover Thyself to me. I know not to sing to Thy glory or to concentrate my mind on Thee in order to picture Thee. How am I to know Thee or comprehend Thy being? A song of adoration I cannot frame; nor can I hold Thee permanently in my heart. Pray, O Lord, reveal to me Thy nature, and the conditions by which my finite mind may hold Thee, the Infinite one. Thou hast bound me to Thyself as Thy slave for ever. Thou hast accepted me. I pray Thee, in all humility and love, after this consecration, to bring me Thy experience, and enable me to enjoy Thee. —*Tukaram.*
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- 47** O Lord, I am in affliction, and my heart is ill at ease, for I am much troubled with the present suffering. And now, O Beloved Father, what shall I say? I am caught in the straits; save Thou me from them. Let it please Thee, O Lord, to deliver me; for poor wretch that I am, what can I do, whither can I go without Thee?

Grant me patience, O Lord, even now in this emergency. Help me, O Lord, and then I will not fear, how grievously soever I be afflicted.

And now amidst my troubles what shall I say ?

Lord, Thy will be done ; I have well deserved to be afflicted and therefore I ought to bear it, with patience. And by Thy Grace, I trust all will be well again and even better. Thy will be done.

- 48** O Thou, our forgiving Mother, who callest us to life and faithful service, forgive us our blind impatience. Chasten our thoughts by attention to present duties, with remembrance of the judgment of thy righteous will. Contented with humble place, may we be faithful in little things, and ready for whatever thou askest us. Let our daily life be ruled by the spirit of unselfishness, in courtesy and brotherly kindness, neither giving nor taking offence, free from sordid ends and servile flattery, free from anger and pride. Ministering to the needs of our fellows, may we be earnestly and calmly bent upon our duties, and free forever from vain desires and useless anxieties. May we trust Thee, O Mother as our wise and guiding Providence. May our constant and heart-felt prayer to Thee be, for ever and ever, not our will, but thine will be done.
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- 49** Almighty and Merciful Father, let the words of our mouth and the meditation of our soul, be now and always such as will be acceptable to Thee.

Look upon our heart, and lives, and renew them with strength and loyalty to Thee.

Give us the strength to fight our daily battles. Make us brave and noble.

Let us not regard life as a burden. Let us be content and patient with what every day sends us.

If we go wrong, let us be ashamed and sorry for it. Let us be alert to do the good we have left undone. Teach us to love the truth above all things, and live it in life. Let us be alert to serve and be friends with fellowman. And keep us free from the vanity and pride of service so rendered. Freedom in truth cannot be won, except by eternal vigilance. Let us be Thy worthy servants always.

- 50** O Lord, I pray that never should evil thought spring in my mind, nor take root. And this I can win only when my heart is set on Thee alone. For the mind and heart, merely empty, are again filled with evil, worse than that which we drive out; therefore, we pray to Thee to be ever near us, to draw us to Thee by love, service and dedication. This is the faith in my heart, this is my earnest longing as well. O Lord, by Thy grace, let it be fulfilled. That is the one thing I covet. I covet nothing else but to be ever in tune with the Infinite—the Eternal good that is ours if only we seek earnestly to reach it. Our prayer to Thee is for this grace and blessing, than which there is no other blessedness in life. To know Thee, to feel Thee, to love Thee and live by Thee—this is our fulfilment, not through our merit, but through Thy infinite mercy and love for the erring one like me.
- Tukaram.*
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- 51** O God, our heavenly Father, bless to us the gift of this new day. We would not treat it as our own, to use as we may please, but as a trust committed to us by Thee, to be kept according to Thy will. Inspire us with a deeper sense of our responsibility; save us from the reproach of treating lightly and carelessly that which Thou deemest worthy of Thy divine thought and care. May our souls grow ever wiser and stronger, that we may not be vexed by the trifles and accidents of life, but may set a high and holy purpose clearly before us, and learn how truly all things work together for good to them that love God. Let it be not in words of prayer only that we draw near to Thee, but in

resolute endeavour throughout the day, and patient continuance in well-doing, that our whole life may be an offering to Thee of true obedience, trust and love.

- 52 Supreme and universal Light, O, Fountain of reason, and Judge of right, O parent of good whose blessings flow on all things above and all things below, assist me to be and act what nature and Thy laws decree. Let me be worthy of that intellectual flame which came from Thee. May my expanded soul ever disdain the narrow view and the selfish aim, and embrace heartily whatever is friendly to the race. O Father, grant me grace and virtue, I ask for nothing more. Let it be my bliss in this world to know and serve Thee, to love Thee for ever, for I know that that is peace here below and blessedness everywhere. Without Thy grace and without virtue, we shall be ever straying in everlasting night, shall be tossed from passion to passion, and will be lost forever in a maze of error, self-conceit, and illusion. Be Thou, therefore, kind to Thy erring child and save it in the manner I pray to Thee for it.
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- 53 Oh Lord, I fall at Thy feet, for they alone and always bring peace to my heart. I call myself Thy servant. Protector of all and a kind master, look upon me with grace. I like to hear Thy name lovingly taken. May my heart ever overflow with love for it. Without any desire, I shall sing it, and with my heart full of love for Thee. May I always love to see Thy face, and everywhere; so that all created beings I come to regard as my brethren. May I ever run away from honour as a nuisance, and bear contumely with contentment and favour. In all things pertaining to the flesh, in all matters of self, make me indifferent. Let me ever associate with such good ones of the earth, as are ever drawn to Thee in love. Oh Lord, Thou always savest those who come to Thee as Thy liegemen. I am a sinful being. Save me, Oh Lord, take me unto Thy bosom and wash away my sin. —*Namdeo.*
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54 O God, our Father, as we enter on this new day, help us to put away all carelessness and selfish ease and wake to the urgent calls of duty. Save us from growing indifferent to the earnestness of life. Let not the world get possession of us, let it not overshadow and enslave the soul. Endow us with riches that are eternal. May we love what is lovely and hate what is evil. Strengthen us in the time of need. When pain or distress takes hold upon us, or the shadow of something dreaded falls on us, give us to have an unfaltering hold of the hand of Love. Give us peace deeper than the disquietudes of life, strength to overcome every foe, joy that shall conquer pain, and love that shall cast out fear. May we do our day's work faithfully, with gladness in the fellowship of thy children, with earnestness, faith and good hope until thou callest us to cease from toil and enter into our rest

55 O Supreme spirit, O Father in Heaven, Giver unto us of all that we wish for, strive for, and live for, our Saviour from temptation, from sin, from impurity and from vice, make us pure, holy, strenuous and divine. Flood our souls with Thy light divine. Make us strong, and make us wise. Give us work that will bring us money and independence; and that will enable us to achieve the highest and the best of which we are capable in this life.

Let there be peace, concord and harmony in the bosom of our family; let us be to one another as brothers and sisters co-operating in a spirit of love, sympathy and fellowship to turn our homes into an effective shelter against the turmoil and trouble of this work-a-day world and to make it into a temple where dwell calm joy, serene self-possession, strenuous devotion to duty, and a ceaseless endeavour for spiritual perfection and self-realisation. Peace and good-will to all.

- 56 Thou must learn obedience. What are thou but a child. Hast thou any real knowledge? Be led along the path even as a child is led. Give thyself entirely to His wishes. Is He not ever as a mother to a child? Is he not as a father unto thee as well. Even his chastisement is thy blessing.

If thou would'st come out pure, true, noble and whole, do not shun Him, be drawn nearer to Him even through sorrow, trouble and affliction. That will temper thy enthusiasm into insight. The child is thoughtless, the youth is wilful. It is the man that is worth while. God's intention is to make men of us in the spiritual sense. He desires that, led by Him, we should be responsible, earnest, well-disciplined, that we should under any trial, manifest our loyalty to Him, and grow in steadfastness of purpose, sincerity of character, and love of soul for Him alone. March forward led by His love and guidance. Let, O God, Thy blessings and love be always with us.

- 57 Oh Lord I am not worthy of Thy consolations, nor of any spiritual visitations : and, therefore, Thou dealest justly with me when Thou leavest me poor and desolate. For though I could shed a sea of tears, still I should not be worthy of Thy consolations. I am not worthy of anything but to be scourged and punished ; because grievously and often I have offended Thee, and in many things have greatly sinned. Wherefore, in the judgment of truth and reason, I am not worthy of the least comfort. But, Thou, O gracious and merciful Mother, who willest not that Thy works should perish, to show the riches of Thy goodness upon the vessels of mercy, vouchsafest even beyond all his desert to comfort Thy servants above the manner of men. For Thy consolations are not like to the discourses of men. I pray, therefore, to give it to me to be Thy loyal and loving servant, and thus deserve to be the vessel of Thy mercy. Thy will be done.
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- 58** O Lord, let us realise deeply and steadily that Thou alone art our father and mother, our brother and friend. Thou art our wealth, our kith and kin, and the core of our being, the only nearest and dearest to us.

Nothing else should rule and sway our heart than this deep conviction. That should be the rule of our life. And in this firm, abiding and unshaken faith, let us live, casting the care and burden of our living upon Thee alone. Thou art our God, Thou art our religion, and all the actions and observances prescribed by it; the forms and ceremonies that tradition enjoins are no more than this abiding faith in Thee and Thy worship and love in the spirit of that faith. Thou alone art our master and preceptor, our holy place of pilgrimage, our *tapas*, our fasting and prayer, our all-in-all. I say, O Lord, to Thee, let me never forget this in every deed of mine. My love of Thee, let that be alone my devotion, my prayer, my worship and my adoration.

—*Tukaram.*

- 59** O Lord, how entirely needful is Thy grace for me to begin anything good, and to proceed with it, and to accomplish it. Without it I can do nothing, but in Thee I can do all things, when Thy grace strengthens me. O Grace truly heavenly! without which our most worthy actions are nothing, nor are the gifts of nature to be esteemed. Neither art, nor beauty, nor riches, nor strength, nor wit, nor eloquence, are of any value without Thy grace, O Lord.

For gifts of nature are common to good and bad, but the peculiar gift of the elect is Grace and Love; and they that bear this honourable mark, are alone accounted worthy of everlasting life.

No, not even faith or hope, or any other virtues are blessed with good fruit without Thy Grace.

I beseech Thee, O Lord, that I may find Grace in Thy sight; for that is sufficient for me, though other things that my nature longeth for, be not obtained.

60 Oh Lord, give us the insight to turn our faith, that Thou art ever near unto us, into the deepest conviction of our life. Let us feel sure that Thou sharest our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear and healest it by Thy love. Let us, therefore cast our earth-born care on Thee, smile at pain and rest in peace. We know that life is a weary way. And each year that passes may bring its own sorrow. But let us not, on that account, shun life, be afraid of darkness, for we know that Thou art near. Often pleasure turns into grief, and faith trembles and turns into fear. But let us never forget that Thou art near. Let us live in this world, whatever our lot, casting our burden upon Thee, becoming more and more worthy of Thy love, and drinking deep of it. Let us work honestly from day to day, content to suffer, prepared to meet with failure, but confident ever that, living and dying, Thou art near. That is what we need most in this life. Nothing else matters so much. All else will follow, if we walk in Thy fear and in Thy love.

61 Oh Lord, I know but too well that I am a sinner. I do not care to understand Thy laws, much less to love and follow them. Even when, in moments of deep heart-searching and penitence, I resolve to seek the truth and turn my face away from the false, to do the right and avoid the wrong, the world and its ways entice me and trap me in. And I live my old ways, once again, of doubt, prevarication and hypocrisy. Save me now from the toils of my own making. Give me the strength to break them and follow Thee. Accept me as I am, and pour Thy grace into my heart. I cannot say aught in extenuation of my past sins. But now faith shines clear in my heart. And I seek Thee, so that the faith may be strengthened by deeds. Sinner I am, in truth; but I fall at Thy feet and pray with a contrite heart. Thou art the all-forgiving. Thy love overflows all bounds. Save me, save me, bless me, lift me up, call me Thy own child, and lead me in the way of righteousness, and truth, and faith abiding. —*Tukaram*.

62 O Lord, with all my heart, I fall at Thy feet, and surrender my being to Thee. O Lord save me. My body, my mind, my thoughts and my words, they are Thine. My desires are all centred in Thee. Nothing else draws me. Therefore, O Lord, I approach Thee as a suppliant to roll the burden off my shoulders, of whatever weighs me down, oppresses me and gives me no peace. No mortal can do it for me. Thou alone art able to do it. We call ourselves Thy servants and may claim to ask of Thee what we need. We beseech Thee to help us, to come to our rescue and save us. We follow Thee, take us along, do not forsake us. Nothing now shall turn us away from Thee. We sit at Thy door, on the threshold of Thy temple, to claim our own. Grant it to us O Lord, out of Thy grace, kindness, mercy and love. Thou art our Mother; like children, wanton and way-ward as they often are, we are still Thine. Make us now Thine, embrace us, bless us, make us whole, and make walk always in Thy ways. Thy will be done.

63 O Lord, Thou hast searched me out and known me: Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising. Thou understandest my thoughts long before.

For lo! there is not a word in the tongue, but Thou, Lord, knowest it altogether.

Whither shall I go then from Thy spirit or whither shall I go then from Thy presence? If I climb up into heaven. Thou art there: if I go down to hell, Thou art there also, If I take the wings of the morning and remain in the uttermost part of the sea, even there also shall Thy hand lead me; and Thy right hand shall hold me.

If I say, peradventure the darkness shall cover me, then shall my night be turned into day.

Yea, the darkness is no darkness with Thee, but Thy night is as clear as the day. The darkness and light to Thee are both alike.

Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart. Prove me and examine my thoughts. Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

64 O Mother, come to me and look upon me with a kindly eye. What can I do without Thy grace? Nothing is clear to me; everything seems so hazy without Thee to guide me, to lead me onwards. I am simply bewildered by myself. I am helpless without Thee to protect and cheer me. I have put my faith in Thee and that is my strength. Therefore, O Mother, save me, lift me up, take me on in every moment of my life. Do not abandon me, sinful though I am, and wayward though I may go. Hasten, O Mother, to rescue me from myself, for then alone I am true to Thee and to myself. Art Thou not my only friend, my helpmate, my father, mother, brother, my companion, my wealth and well-being, my all-in-all? Whom then shall I harken, whom may I call, to whom can I pray and look up to, if not to Thee, my only salvation and strength, here and elsewhere? Be kind, be kind, I implore to Thee, O Mother, and have mercy on me, as on an erring child, who would walk in Thy fear and in the shelter of Thy love. That is the benediction I seek of Thee for ever and for ever

65 Oh Father, we know we are so full of faults, and knowing them, how often we fail to overcome them! Forgive us our trespasses, we say, but we never give up our old habits and turn over a new leaf. Lead us, therefore, by the hand and make us do what, unaided, we cannot do for our own regeneration. We are here to build up something else than mere fortune. We must take good care of the mansion of our soul. We must take better care still of the soul itself. But do we ever try to know what that soul is? It is more than mere breath, as we feel when we are tuned to the highest. Give us, out of Thy mercy and grace, to know ourselves, and so to live that the knowledge will deepen our character and the character so deepened will issue forth

in the service and love of fellowman, based on love for Thee, in whom we live, move and have our being. Forgive us ever, and take us every day nearer unto Thee. That is the highest to which we should aspire, and, for the rest, be content with what Thou sendest us.

- 66** Most mighty God, Thou zealous lover of faithful souls! O that Thou wouldst consider the labour and sorrow of Thy servant, and assist him in all things he undertakes.

Strengthen me with heavenly courage, lest the old man, the miserable flesh, not as yet fully subject to the spirit, prevail and get the upper hand; against which, it will be needful for me to fight, as long as I breathe in this life.

Alas, what a kind of life is this, where tribulation and miseries are never wanting: where all is full of snares and enemies!

For when one tribulation or temptation retreateth, another cometh on; yea, and while the first conflict is yet lasting many others come unexpected one after another.

Oh Lord, therefore, be the staff of my life, my refuge from evil, my shield against temptation, my shelter against self-illusion, and misunderstanding of the world. Thy light should guide me ever, Thy hand lead me onwards. Humble, penitent and resolved to do better, I approach Thy throne, kneel down and pray. Oh Lord, save me from myself and from the world.

- 67** Lord God, Holy Father, be Thou blessed both now and for evermore, because as Thou wilt, so it is done, and what Thou dost is good for us always.

Let me as Thy servant rejoice in Thee, and not in myself, nor in anything else; for Thou alone art true gladness, Thou alone art my hope and crown, Thou art my joy and my honour, O Lord.

What hath Thy servant, but what he hath received from Thee, even without any merit of his own ?

Thine are all things, both what Thou hast given, and what Thou hast made. I am poor and in trouble, from my youth onwards. And my soul is sorrowful sometimes even unto tears ; sometimes also my spirit is disquieted, by reason of impending sufferings.

I long after the joy of peace, the peace of Thy children, I earnestly crave, who are fed by Thee in the light of Thy comfort. Grant it Thou to me, and heal me, O Lord ; so that I may have peace and strength to go about my task with perfect unconcern as to what comes of it as a fruit unto myself, so it be honestly and earnestly done.

- 68** Oh, our Divine Mother, give us the strength and the joy to walk in the path of purity, truth and holiness, that our conscience points out to us. Let us realise that Thou art near us always and never failest us in our hour of trial and sorrow and that every such experience means a step higher towards perfection. And that it is a lesson in self-knowledge and self-sacrifice driving us forward to love and serve our fellow-beings. A state of affluence is a state of self-forgetfulness, when we forget Thee and behave insolently to our brethren. Any condition of life that makes us self-satisfied is a step downwards towards degeneration and decay. Hence, be every experience of life welcome to us that turns us to Thee, that compels us to turn the searchlight inwards, that keeps us firm in the path of virtue and meekness and fellowship with men. Oh Mother, forgive us all the errors of the past and give us renewed power to overcome all our defects. Let us never forget that it is in Thy wisdom, that we are wise ; it is in Thy love that we are blessed ; and it is in communion with Thee alone that we may hope to win the peace that passeth understanding.
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I

Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

II

Take my hands, let them move
At the impulse of Thy love;
Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and steadfast, all for Thee.

III

Take my voice and let me sing,
Always, only for my king;
Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.

IV

Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold;
Take my intellect and use
Every power as Thou shalt choose.

V

Take my will and make it thine,
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.

VI

Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure-store;
Take myself, and I will be,
Ever, only, all, for Thee.

70 Father, in Thy mysterious presence kneeling
 Fain would our souls feel all Thy kindling love :
 For we are weak, and need some deep revealing
 Of trust and strength and calmness from above.
 Lord we have wandered forth through doubt and sorrow,
 And Thou hast made each step an onward one :
 And we will ever trust, each unknown to-morrow,
 Thou wilt sustain us till its work is done.
 In the heart's depths a peace, serene and holy,
 Abides, and when pain seems to have her will,
 Or we despair, Oh ! may that peace rise slowly,
 Stronger than agony, and we be still.
 Now, Father, now, in Thy great Presence kneeling,
 Our spirits yearn to feel Thy kindling love ;
 Now make us strong, we need Thy deep revealing
 Of trust and strength and calmness from above.

—Annie Besant.

71 They say so many things, right or wrong about me, O, Lord. I pray to be given the strength to bear them all patiently and go forward. Let my trust in Thee grow stronger, let my conduct be straighter, and my heart purer, the more a friend or foe seeks to misrepresent or ridicule me. Duty and work allotted by Thee to me, is all that I know, and is all that I should attend to. Let me put my very best in the task given me to do, and care not very much what they say. If I walk in the light of conscience, even if I err, Thou wilt forgive me and bring me back to the right path. Let my faith in Thee be my strength ; let it grow stronger and deeper as I advance in life. And even if it is not given me to see Thy face, on this side of life, may I find it true in my heart to say that I shall be nearer to Thee and experience Thy shining Presence, the purer I become, the more forgiving I am, and the more wakeful I make myself to see that I do not fall below the standard I have set myself ; and live, from day to day, in

fear and in love of Thee. We say that Thou art our father, mother, friend and everything. Alas! we do not live up to that utterance. If only we did it, we are sure Thou wilt not forsake us. Thy will be done for ever. And Thy will shall always be for our good. Give me this faith, this enlightenment, this staving power, and the strength of the soul to bear and endure calmly whatever betides.

- 72** Let us all fall at the feet of the dear Father and Mother, whose praise the saints have sung along the ages. He is our only shelter in this life. Loving Him we live as brothers and sisters, one to the other. He is all-powerful, all-knowing; He is the fountain of mercy, forgiveness and peace. In faith and trust let us approach Him, let us remember Him for ever; and He will relieve us of sorrow and restlessness. For He dwells in our heart and is the soul of our souls. When we are in the midst of difficulties, in the storm and stress of life, let us turn to Him as to our pilot. He will take us across to a safe haven, unmindful if we are rich or poor, so we trust Him implicitly. He knows how to save us. He is anxious that we go to Him. In this life, He will not give us up. Let us sing to Him and of Him, for He is our home and shelter, blessed and holy and pure. He is the abode of peace and joy. If only we are pure in heart and meek and dutiful, He will not forsake us. Let us, therefore, kneel down and pray to Him with a contrite heart, and rise fit and strong and wise to take up the duties of life, with patience and fortitude and with a cheerful heart. In realisation that in Him we live and move and have our being, lies the salvation of our life, and our hope for the future. May we never lose that anchor of our soul, whatever else we lose or gain in life. That is the benediction we seek of Thee, O Lord, our Father and Mother in one, and our only father and mother here and hereafter.
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73 Oh ! let it be ours, to remember Thee always, to sing of Thee, to praise Thee and to love Thee. For that alone shall bring us peace. Thus shall we lay on ourselves all joy, all grace, all beauty. We shall then enjoy God and have perfect bliss. We, then, forget ourselves and live in God alone. This is being in the world and yet not of it. This is being in the body and yet detached from it. Like the pure flame of fire, let us live, so that no evil, no sin, no stain will touch us, and all that is not of God will be burnt up in us. We pray, O Lord, to be possessed of this grace, to have only this blessing from Thee. In this is our supreme good, this is our greatest glory, and our highest fulfillment—to be united with Thee, to have our souls filled with Thy consciousness, and to be lifted above all narrow cares, and the ever-persistent thought of mine and thine. The joy of life lies in love of all, to realise that all creatures are our kith and kin—trees, creepers, birds, beasts and all. This is what makes solitude blessed. This is what saves us from the taint of the world. We enjoy the Earth in which we are cradled, we love the canopy of the sky that shelters us. The mind plays in such an atmosphere and is attuned properly. Then any state is blissful. Communion with one's self reconciles us to all life. We see the universe in us, and us in the universe. That is joy, that is good fortune, that is our fulfillment. Then come discrimination, detachment, true devotion and love. It is the love that liberates. O God, none can work this transformation in us except Thee. O *Narayan*, I pray for this, for I know when this comes, all thing will be added on to it.—*Tukaram*.

74 Oh Lord, we are all such waverers and shirkers in the daily duties of life. We often like to think of great opportunities and occasions when we hope to do better. But we forget that life is made up of small duties and ordinary occasions for most of us, which, if well attended to, bring us nearer to Thee and make us blessed.

Great wealth, great rank, genius of a high order, heroic action and supreme self-sacrifice are allotted only to a few.

The common run of people do not get these and yet their lives are as important in Thine eyes as the lives of heroes, martyrs and men of genius in thought and action. And the common multitude of men are as much the care of God as the selected and fortunate ones of the Earth. Let us not, therefore, pine that we belong to the rank and file. Let us realise that in the field where we are placed is our proper work and the proper means of fulfilment and joy. And, if day-to-day we remember Thee, morning and evening, and at all times, that Thou art near by to sustain us and lead us on, our humble lives may be made pure, holy strenuous and divine. And that is our work here.

Oh God give us the strength to do it. Let us do it with love. Save us from heart-pining. Let us feel and realise like Brother Lawrence, that wherever we are, we can be truly Thy servants and enter into Thy presence. Thy will be done and in Thee we live and move and have our being. Therefore, let us fear not, let us be true to ourselves, and let us work and rest and pray in the faith that Thou wilt ever shelter us, lead us up and give us the means of blessedness and peace even in our small and neglected sphere of thought and action

75

Not alone for mighty empire,
 Stretching forth o'er land and sea,
 Not alone for bounteous harvests,
 Lift we up our hearts to Thee.
 Standing in the living present
 Memory and hope between,
 Lord, we would with deep thanksgiving
 Praise Thee more for things unseen.

Not for battleship and fortress,
 Not for conquests of the sword,
 But for conquests of the spirit
 Give we thanks to Thee, O Lord ;
 For the heritage of freedom,
 For the home, the church, the school,
 For the open door to manhood
 In the lands the people rule.

For the armies of the faithful
 Lives that passed and left no name ;
 For the glory that illumines
 Patriot souls of deathless fame ;
 For the peoples' prophet-leaders,
 Loyal to Thy living word,—
 For all heroes of the spirit,
 Give we thanks to Thee O Lord.

God of Justice save the peoples
 From the war of race and creed,
 From the strife of class and faction—
 Make our nations free indeed ;
 Keep their faith in simple manhood
 Strong as when their lives began,
 Till they find their full fruition
 In the Brotherhood of Man !

